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ABSTRACT

This report reviews the national educational reform movement of the 1980's, with particular attention directed to seven states: California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington. The first chapter provides background information on the educational reform movement. The second chapter focuses on the reform activities taking place in the above seven states. The third chapter discusses educational reform actions taking place in the areas of student achievement; the education profession; school governance, structure, and finance; innovation; and implementation and oversight. The final chapter discusses the possible futures of educational reform, and concludes that the educational reform movement was a more informed effort than is usually realized, but there remains an important state government need for applied research assistance to guide policy decisions. A summary of the national reports and an eight-page list of additional reading references are appended. (Author/CB)

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"...the best of educations"

Reforming America's Public Schools in the 1980's

by William Chance

SP 028 857

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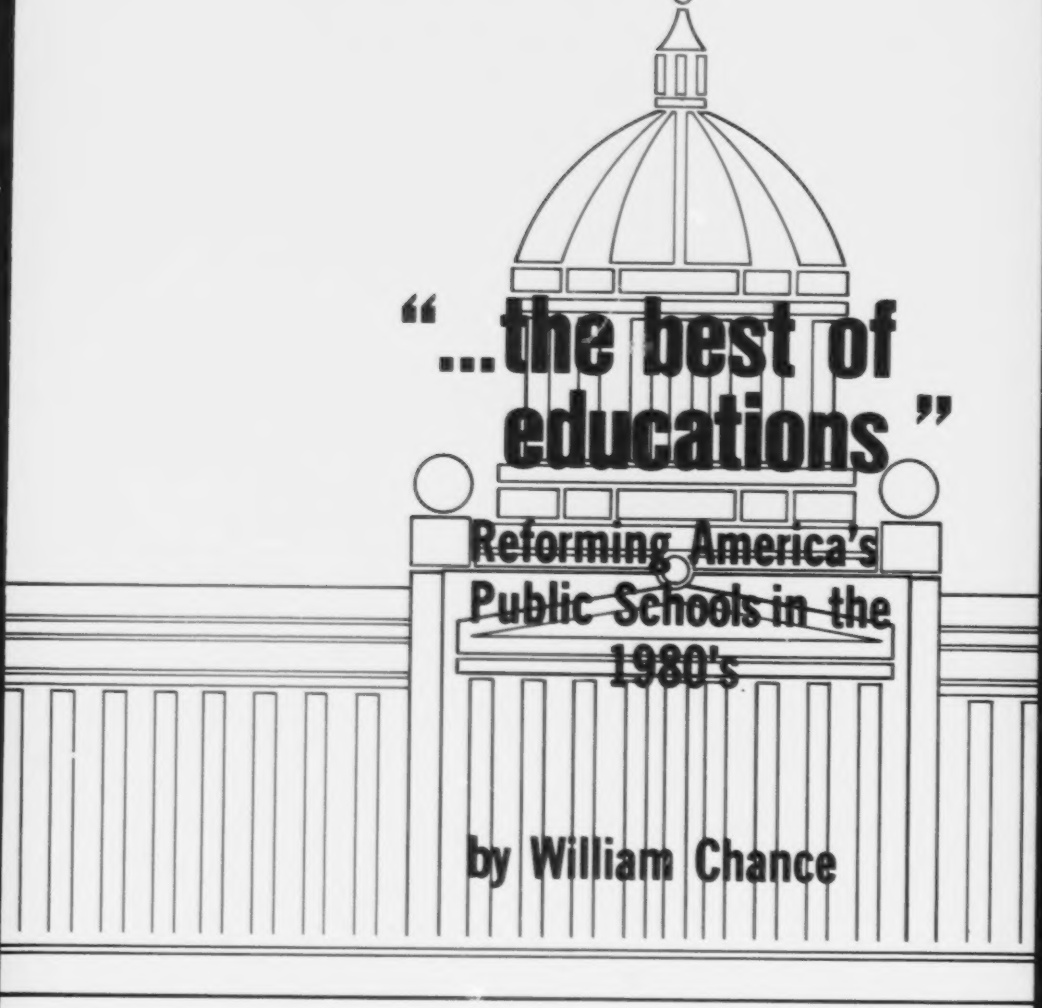

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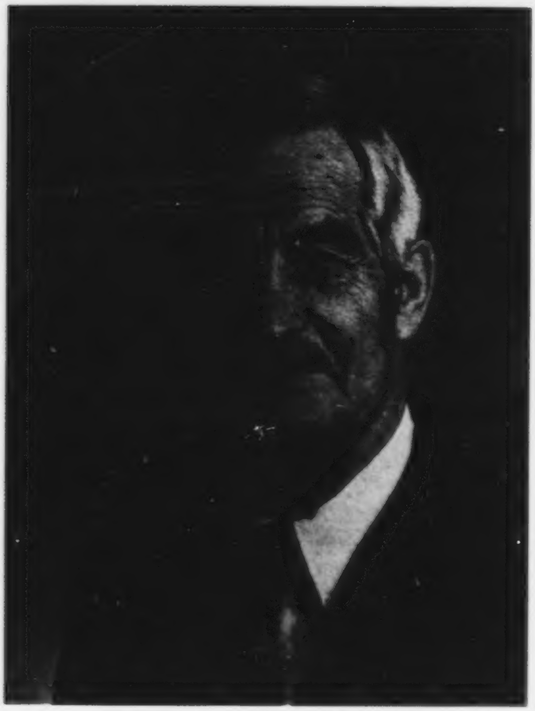

To Fred T. Haley, of Tacoma, Washington, who in his commitment to public education combines the finest ideals of business and service; who probably has forgotten more about education than most of us ever will know; and who was seeking equality with excellence in education when complacency was the more popular convention.

"We had the best of educations — in fact, we went to school every day —"

"I've *been to day-school too," said Alice; "you needn't be so proud as all that."*

"With extras?" asked the Mock Turtle a little anxiously.

"Yes," said Alice, "we learned French and music."

"And washing?" said the Mock Turtle.

"Certainly not!" said Alice indignantly.

"Ah! then yours wasn't really a good school," said the Mock Turtle in a tone of great relief. "Now at ours *they had at the end of the bill, 'French, music* and washing — *extra'."*

"You couldn't have wanted it much," said Alice, "living at the bottom of the sea."

"I couldn't afford to learn it," said the Mock Turtle with a sigh. "I only took the regular course."

"What was that?" inquired Alice.

"Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with," the Mock Turtle replied: "and then the different branches of Arithmetic — Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision."

Lewis Carroll ***Alice in Wonderland***

Abstract

The report is a review of the national educational reform movement of the 1980s' with particular attention directed to seven states: California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington. On the basis of relevant literature and interviews conducted in late 1985 and early 1986, essentially in the subject states and in Washington, D.C, the report concludes that the present reforms are on the right track, but additional effort will be required before the public educational system approaches its full promise.

Continuous enrollment growth in the public education system during the first half of the century led to curricular adjustments that diverted emphases away from academic and educational rigor — education, and onto school retention — attendance. Instead of a system that provided education for all, the public schools of America focused on schooling for all. The results became apparent in the 1970s and 1980s in the form of dispersed curricula, diminished requirements, and declining test scores.

Major national studies published in the early 1980s influenced actions in the states, although in most instances state reviews and reform efforts already were underway. In several cases additional taxes were necessary to fund the improvement programs, and this induced efforts to enlist the business sector in the enterprise. The national economy and competition in international commerce were additional considerations. Much of the reform emphasis fell on the secondary schools, in concert with public and business sector demands for literate graduates.

In most states, individual leaders were important, and governors, legislators, state school chiefs, and prominent citizens assumed critical roles. Although the reform movements assumed distinctively political coloring as the critical campaigns were waged in the legislative assemblies, it is inaccurate to assume that educators were not present in an effective way. Similarly, while charismatic leadership and distinctive leadership styles were important, individuals were unable to accomplish the changes alone, and political coalitions were necessary in all of the important change states.

ABSTRACT

Most of the reforms can be categorized under student achievement and educational profession headings, with graduation requirements, competency standards, testing, class size, and attendance programs fitting under the first, and teacher preparation, salary, testing, and evaluation programs arrayed under the second. Most progress so far has occurred in the first category, as funding limitations and professional resistance have slowed movement in the second.

The outlook is uncertain, especially if the commitment to educational reform begins to flag. More attention to changes affecting the education professions (particularly teacher preparation programs) is called for, as well as more emphasis on the involvement of the higher education sector in cooperative curricular planning. As the emphasis must shift upward from the high schools to the colleges and universities, particularly to the education schools, so also must it be moved downward into the middle and elementary schools. An important issue is literacy, and the high schools are a little late for that.

The report concludes that the education reform effort was a more informed effort than is usually realized, but there remains an important state government need for applied research assistance to guide policy decisions. State higher education institutions offer an important potential in this area. Further attention to the purposes and relevance of student testing programs is recommended, along with continuing emphasis on the identification of competency standards. Similarly, continuing information collection activities to determine which of the reforms are working and which are not and arrangements for communicating such findings to the states are considered vital.

In the end, and in spite of lingering criticism, the reform movement symbolizes an important retraction of the delegation of responsibility for public education that has characterized the system for the past 100 years, carrying a promise of future meaningful public involvement. This, coupled with the prospect of the true achievement of universal education (albeit by mandate) makes it all worthwhile.

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Preface

> *"Would you tell me please, which way I ought to walk from here?"*
>
> *"That depends a great deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.*
>
> *"I don't much care where —" said Alice.*
>
> *"Then it doesn't matter which way you walk," said the Cat.*
>
> *"— so long as I get* somewhere*," Alice added as an explanation.*
>
> *"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk far enough."*
>
> Lewis Carroll ***Alice in Wonderland***

Every narrative needs a point of view. Fixing the perspective of this report was one of the more difficult parts of its preparation. Approaching the endeavor both as a political scientist (a title that may be a contradiction in terms) and former state policy researcher whose territory encompassed public education, it soon was apparent that some decision between personal, academic and practical proclivities would be necessary. Either the report would be rooted in the literature of the discipline or it would emphasize the dynamics of the movement itself. At issue was a decision whether to consider education reform in the context of a stylistically academic assessment of the public policy process, or with greater spontaneity, as a modern expression of populism with meaning and content of its own. A bias for the latter formed.

This writer's association with the Washington State Temporary Committee on Educational Policies, Structure, and Management from 1983 through 1985 stimulated strong personal feelings about the worth of it all. That experience was something more than an extensive exercise; the people who carried the program through the din of heated public hearings acquired an abiding belief in what they had done, and a persistent affinity to what they were suggesting. To abandon those opinions would be to ignore deeply-felt convictions.

Sometimes one is too close to the boats to appreciate the race. So it is with many observers of the school reform movement. They see American education as evolving through a consecution of pendular swings, seeking rest somewhere between intellectual and utilitarian extremes, with the present arc representing a predictably conservative "back to basics" bias, which will be displaced by more progressive values sometime in the next decade.

Maybe so. But the position of this report is that such a conception of education's evolution is imprecise. Throughout its modern existence the practice of public education has mocked its grandest ideal: *Universal Education*. While providing *schooling* to the masses, in practice the program has limited *education* to the few. To characterize the present movement as a simple return to basics, a recurrent spasm, or one more wave in a ceaseless and uncontrollable flow of cyclical impulses, misses the very important point that for most Americans' *education* was never there. It was not ten years ago, and it was not 50 years ago.

The reality is almost too disquieting. But it is why the present imposition of common standards is so important. By decree (if statutes enacted by legislative assemblies can be called decrees) states are mandating the conterminous presence of excellence *and* equity by imposing academic requirements that must be met by *all* students, Black and White, sparkling and dull. In doing so, they move the system toward its fundamental goal of Universal Education *for the first time ever*.

Viewed in this context, contemporary reform efforts, the reforms of the seventies and eighties, represent a concerted attack on an old paradigm, on a system that had as its unstated assumption the conviction that most children cannot learn. In their emphasis on learning requirements that all children must fulfill, the requirements, the standards, presume all can, and they thereby seek to bring the derogated dimension — intellectualism — to parity. Viewed in this light, the efforts become infinitely more powerful than what they may seem.

The enactments are not presented as conclusions to carefully constructed syllogisms, nor are they expressed in the excitement of ringing manifestos. Rarely are they even described in the manner suggested here. But statutes requiring *all* high school students to complete requirements in academic subjects are an engaging way of stating that *all* children shall receive an education of substance. And therein lies the worth of it all.

All of this, when coupled with the new and authoritative involvement of governors and legislatures, symbolizes an important adjustment in a history of delegation — a new reassertion of the public interest. This can be exciting, although there must be caution. If it has been decided that the form and definition of education are too important to leave permanently unexamined with the educators, then it also must be seen that these are too delicate for permanent assignment to the state house. A new dialectic must form, and it must lead to a new synthesis — a balance of responsiveness with accountability and authority with responsibility.

The public educational system has been under attack. With the system's many weaknesses, it sometimes helps to remember that it is this same system that prepared most of the leaders, businessmen, politicians, scientists, and artists who have made this nation one of the more advanced in the world. What now is required is an extension of those educational advantages to an enormously larger fraction of the whole. Recognition that this is the goal — not the continuous denigration of the enterprise — may help.

These are the important messages. They shape the report that follows.

Acknowledgements

Many individuals and a few organizations assisted directly or indirectly in the preparation of this report. The list starts with the University of Washington, especially the Institute for Public Policy and Management and the Graduate School of Public Affairs, whose director and dean graciously agreed to extend their facilities and resources to the effort, and whose administration went along with the deal. It continues with people across the country who engaged in long conversations, arranged introductions, offered advice, collected materials, and endured lengthy inquiries into experiences and impressions that were long before displaced from the forefront of their interests.

Because some people participated on condition of anonymity, it is not appropriate to list them here. But they know who they are, and they will know this expression of gratitude extends to them. Others can be named, and they include Alice Vermillion, Betty Jane Narver, Francis Timlin, Bob Goldstein, William Pierce, Carol Eliason, Susan Tramun, Peggy Siegel, Peter Gerber, Stephen Blair, Sandra Blair, Cynthia Brown, Ed Keller, Mike Usdan, Jewell Gould, Allan Odden, Arthur Wise, Marsha Levine, Graham Down, Norton Grubb, Anne Hallett, Kathy Watters, Thomas Timar, William Cunningham, Marilyn Bittle, Sandra Smith, Lindsay DeRoche, David Gordon, James Smith, Henry Alder, Bernard Gifford, Michael Kirst, Davis Campbell, James Guthrie, John Mochler, Bernard Goldstein, Linda Bond, Patrick Callan, William Whiteneck, Susanne Ness, Keith Pailthorp, Alice Pailthorp, Allison Cowles, Connie Anderson, Barbara Gillespie, Ed Steinbrecher, Calvin Frazier, Robin Johnston, George Bruner, Roger Nepple, William Haldeman, Doug Gowler, Frank Newman, Rexford Brown, Dick Jonsen, Cliff Freeman, Peggy Anet, Aims McGuiness, Chris Pipho, Barbara Holmes, Bob Palaich, Dorothy Ruth, Michael O'Farrell, Martha Chang, Lewis Carroll, Robert Bickel, Roy McTarnagan, Cecil Golden, Jack Leppert, Don McGruder, Debbie Galley, Clark Maxwell, Paul Downey, Richard Layer, Ralph Turlington, Edward Allen, Shelley Boone, Joe Mills, Mike Bakalis, James Coleman, Gene Hoffman, Reg Weaver, Sherman, Richard Mulcahey, Sally Pancrezio, John Alford, Nelson Ashline, Lee Patton, Gordon Brown, Carol Furman, Edward Keen, Carol Lompard, Roo, Gail Lieberman, Dickie Lutz, EJ, Terry Peterson, Sidney Porter, Robert Hill, Betty Cunningham, Jackie Johnson, Moody Oswald, Henry Hollingsworth, Steve Elliott, Joanne Anderson, Diane Ashworth, Crosby Lewis, Terry McCarthy, Graham Johnson, Don Thomas, Ben Graves, Larry Yawn, William Kirby, Thomas

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Thank you all. It is hoped that the information provided herein will represent a reasonable return on your investment.

William Chance
Olympia, Washington
September, 1986

Introduction

"When you say 'hill'," the Queen interrupted, "I could show you hills, in comparison with which you'd call that a valley."

"No, I shouldn't," said Alice, surprised into contradicting her at last: "a hill can't *be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense —"*

The Red Queen shook her head, "You may call it 'nonsense' if you like," she said, "But I've heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary!"

Lewis Carroll ***Through The Looking-Glass***

Some still find it curious, but the 1980s have been superlative years for advocates of change in America's massive public educational system. Reports drumming the case for reform have cascaded onto the public consciousness with the consistency of the winter rains in Seattle. In 1983, the Education Commission of the States reported that more than 250 education task forces had been established to develop education reform programs; a few months later, the estimate was increased to 275.[1]

It has quieted some now, but ranging between the National Commission on Education Excellence's report, ***A Nation at Risk***, and the most recent additions to the literature (the Carnegie Forum's Task Force on Teaching's report, ***A Nation Prepared*** and the National Governors' Association's ***Time For Results***), a catenation of engaging pronunciamentos has enlarged more limited concerns into a full-fledged national movement.[2] Linkages between the nation's economic well-being and academics have found expression at all levels of government, determining the tone, content, and shape of responses to what has become and seems to have remained a commonly acknowledged crisis.

Following the heat of the summer, it is difficult to measure the effects of a storm, and so it is with all of this. The reforms are seen both as significant and superficial. Skepticism over their relevance, precision, and persistence underlies metaphorical references to band-aids, furniture rearrangements, and additional coats of paint. A Washington-based (the city) analyst argues that "if the reforms do not affect who is teaching and what is going on in the classroom, they can hardly be considered reforms. One is hard-pressed to employ the term reform — improvement, maybe, but to call it reform is to misuse the vocabulary."[3]

Such opinions find their opposites in more favorable expressions: "Superficial is too simple. The mandates are not superficial but highly specific, like a lesson plan from the legislature." And, "The reform movement is founded on good ideas, plausible things. We had lost our way in education, forgot what we're supposed to be doing. We taught them everything, how to drive, everything, but we forgot the fundamentals. Now we are refocusing attention on what is important: curriculum and instruction."[4]

Differing perspectives abound. The state programs are criticized for their centralizing bent, with references to the inherent rigidity of mandated standards pitted against the predictably more virtuous flexibility of decentralized encouragement. Educators are characterized as self-serving and unresponsive while simultaneously celebrated as dedicated professionals operating in exceptionally demanding environments. Business is castigated for supercilious arrogance and anti-union propensities, and panegyrized for its managerial excellence. Educational unionism itself evokes contradiction as teachers strive for professional autonomy through associations committed to collective behavior. Through it all, pessimism and optimism alternate in a vernaculated *pas de deux*.

A strong plebian caste is evident as the reform movements are reported as modern expressions of populism. Chester Finn writes that the "reforms are more concerned with results than pedagogy, and the major movements have been composed by laymen. Because of this they have never had the support of the academic research community."[5] In the words of people from each coast, "The [movement] is the opposite of rational; the reports are not research reports, and the political leaders' responses are rarely based on careful research." "People would be horrified to discover how superficial the bases for many of these changes are."[6]

Education reform is all of these things. It displays a distinctly pragmatic quality, and some of the changes have ventured closely to the Philistinian brink. It also conveys a sense of frustration over an intellectual drift that has characterized the enterprise for far too long.

Revolution is a term often heard. Its application to present conditions may "represent a misuse of the vocabulary," but more prosaic references, in their possession of only slightly more comfortable connotations, prove only slightly less controversial. In education, the vocabulary is often misused. Expressions coined for their descriptive utility slide rapidly into the argot of the trade. "School Improvement" is one example; "Effective Schools," and "School-Based Management" are two others. All are presented here with capital letters because they would otherwise mean different things to the public and to the educational community.[7] Since education revolution and reform are not among the more welcome of expressions in the profession, their continued present meaning is assured, and they become the terms of choice here.

More important, these words help to distinguish the magnitude and range of change: they imply an intensity quite different from the continuing patterns of adjustment represented by the packages of education proposals routinely presented to state legislatures at the beginning of each session. And they suggest higher purpose. Perhaps unheralded, the reform movement embodies a reassertion of public control, not fully reversing the professional accretion that formed a noticeable trend for the last 60 years, but conveying an implication of the future meaningful involvement of a much broader coalition.

Whether all of this continues is yet to be determined. It is far from certain that the values of access and excellence can co-exist in equilibrium. It also is far from certain that the commitment and perseverance necessary for profound and lasting change are present, or that it is within the capacity of governments to stay the course.

This much is clear. For at least the last century, public education has been adrift. Caught up in the tension between individualism and collectivism in the nation's myth structure, the schools have been ravaged by the mutually adversarial positions that the values of intellectualism and utilitarianism have come to occupy.

Conventional perception views public education in a perpetual quest for the simultaneous realization of intellectualism and access ("learning" and "schooling," "access" and "quality"). Such an impression, however, is imprecise.[8] While adhering to distinctly egalitarian principles, the schools have operated under singularly non-democratic presumptions, perhaps best exemplified by tracking systems emanating from pervasive doubts about the educability of most students. In the process, academic rigor and educational universality have been rendered virtually incompatible.

Two traditions weigh heavily in all of this. The first is the peculiarly American conception of the purposes of the public schools. The second concerns the influence of the economic system, especially the employment marketplace, and education's connection to it.

Americans embrace an almost mystical belief in the social roles of the public schools. More than any other institution, they call upon them to cure the nation's ills. In the words of Diane Ravitch:

> Whether in the early 19th century or the late 20th century, Americans have argued for more schooling on the grounds that it would preserve democracy, eliminate poverty, lower the crime rate, enrich the common culture, reduce unemployment, ease the assimilation of immigrants to the nation, overcome differences between ethnic groups, advance scientific and technological progress, prevent traffic accidents, raise health standards, redefine moral character, and guide young people into useful professions.[9]

Michael Kirst observes that the schools are expected to impart information and teach intellectual skills, transmit social values, develop individuality, encourage self-esteem, promote good health, provide vocational preparation, prepare for life and leisure, develop moral integrity, and separate and select for careers or college.[10] *A Nation at Risk* decries the "often conflicting demands . . . placed on [the] nation's schools and colleges, [which] are routinely called on to provide solutions to personal, social, and political problems the home and other institutions either will not or cannot resolve."[11]

Two problems compound these assignments. The first concerns the range of the expectation and the related lack of attainability. The second is the absence of any order of priority. No goal is considered more important than any other; none is basic, a *sine qua non*, or *primus enter pares*.

The second is that the role the economic system has played in the formulation of educational purposes is even greater than usually recognized, driving both the decisions of students to enter school and the shape of the programs they are provided while there. Indeed, as concerns for the capacity of the schools to accommodate 20th century enrollment growth have formed a persistent theme, so also have the relevance of education to the economy and an active school role in the relationship.

Recently and significantly, the economic imperative has shifted from demands for trained workers to calls for a fully educated populace. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the opening lines of *A Nation at Risk*:

> Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world.[12]

While an earlier economic influence described a role for the schools in keeping children out of the employment market until they could enter as adults with schooled manual skills, the present message is academics for all. In both instances the economic influence has been strong. It was economic forces that led to Progressive Education (presented with capital letters here because it means different things to educators and to others), with curricula weighted toward social relevance and away from academic irrelevance. It is a subsequent series of economic reactions centering on the quality of education, the relationship of education to economic growth and development, and corresponding anxieties over the nation's international standing that stimulate and shape the reforms of the seventies and eighties and their emphasis on academic skills. These different expressions of economic determinism parallel the nation's shift from an industrial to an information economy.

These factors, the exceptional range of social goals and the related absence of any sense of relative importance, and the traditional economic influence on education, combine to lend a particular cast to the present reforms. Student achievement is the object, and the high schools are the focus.

In some respects, these emphases are awry. The secondary school changes are important, of course, but if the reforms stop with them, they will have missed the target. This statement is predicated on a belief that there must be one educational goal that is basic, necessary to the achievement of any other, the first principle of education—the achievement of literacy.[13] It is hinted in the fact that the economic need is usually expressed as a requirement for people who can read and write. If literacy is an issue, and it is, the high schools are a little late. This is one problem with the present reforms — not that they are invalid, only that they are out of order.

John Goodlad suggests that the first round of reforms has addressed only the obvious things. There must be a second round where real changes are considered.[14] It is unlikely that such a succeeding round will present itself in the explosive form of the first: another university professor suggests "there will not be one logical second round, but a series of ripples."[15] A shift to the earlier grades without backing away from what is being accomplished for the secondary years — with the goal of universal literacy — would be a worthy change in direction.

The second major emphasis of the reforms has been on the educational professions. Progress there, aside from the time-tested remedy represented by adjustments in teacher salaries (and not even that in all states) has been marginal. The stress on differentiated, performance-based salary systems accompanied by appropriate evaluation processes has not met with much professional receptivity, at least in part because of inadequate funding. Many of these programs are not much advanced beyond where they were when they started, and some may be already fading into that special limbo reserved for other departures from educational norms. The second round of reform will need to pay attention to this dimension as well.

Finally, most of the changes have been accomplished by statute, and in most of the reform states the legislature rather than the state board or department of education has been the central arena. A half-dozen years ago, Arthur Wise introduced the term "hyperrationalization" to describe attention to trivia and detail, measurement and accountability, at the expense of teaching and learning that is one product of too much legislative interest.[16] He is correct, of course, although legislatures are not the only sources of legislated learning. If that trap can be avoided, clarified learning objectives leading to improved practices and higher student achievement can be another result.

In any event, the reassertion of ownership implied by the political nature of the present reform movement represents a direct if unheralded challenge of important traditional presumptions, about the educability of students, about the omniscience of professionals, about a public presence in the locus of control. More than this, and maybe willy-nilly, the political response is predicated on the brash assertion that all children can learn, and all should be educated. This makes the risk worth taking.

These are some of the themes explored in the pages that follow. In the belief that the contemporary changes are a continuation of much greater evolutionary processes and cannot be fully appreciated if removed from their larger historical context, the immediately following section is devoted to an outline of recent history. It is then followed by sections containing descriptions of the processes by which the changes in the states occurred and the programs resulting from them. The final section is moderately reflective and contains suggestions for future action.

ONE

The Setting

Sometimes those who led the battles seemed to forget why it was important to keep students in school longer — to forget that the fight for higher enrollments was part of a crusade against ignorance, and that institutions would be judged by what their students had learned as well as by how many were enrolled.

Diane Ravitch **The Troubled Crusade**

We must welcome the future, remembering that soon it will be the past; and we must respect the past, remembering that it was once all that was humanly possible.

George Santayana

"Twinkle, twinkle, little bat:
How I wonder what you're at?"

Lewis Carroll **Alice in Wonderland**

Even in a setting somewhat more apprehensible than the grand sweep of history, universal schooling in this country is a relatively recent social innovation. The years of this century have been its years of infancy, as they also have been for teaching and school administration as distinct professions. As this social program was evolving, so also were the professions that planned, directed, and maintained it, and defined its philosophical purposes. The educational reforms of the 1980s, as those that proceeded them, must be seen in this context: all apply to a program that itself is still new and still forming.

Universal schooling arrived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries amid general population increases and what must have seemed to be ceaseless streams of immigration, signaling the presence in secondary schools not only of native-born Americans from social classes not previously represented, but unprecedented numbers of immigrants, many of whom spoke little if any English. All encountered cadres who possessed little confidence in their ability to learn. Accommodations assumed the form of programs intended to keep students off the streets, and off the labor market, by keeping them interested, occupied, and in school. Retention gradually intruded on education in the public schools as the operative purpose, as academic program diminution in the interests of attendance (often rationalized in terms of social utilitarianism — preparing adolescents for socially and economically productive lives) became the typical response. The history of American education, then, is a history of adjustments which until recently had the effect of moving the schools away from a focus on the cultivation of the intellect to the inculcation of utilitarian values. Academic offerings for the college-bound came to represent a progressively diminishing (if elite) fraction of the whole, as other tracks (vocational, general, fast and slow) formed and expanded through the ensuing decades.

An understanding of the flight from academics that formed the prominent characteristic of universal education's first century is essential to an appreciation of the significance of changes in later years, since it prevailed in growing detail and specificity from the initial attacks on 19th century educational classicism to the reform movements of the 1970s and '80s. The journey featured contempt for intellectualism (academics) and respect for universality (access) — and a change in purpose from intellectual enhancement to attendance as the normative paradigm: "education for all," was displaced by the operative paradigm, "schooling for all."

Seen in this context, contemporary reform efforts do not represent one more in a perpetual series of repetitive adjustments as much as a profoundly new attack on a persistent ideology. To argue, therefore, that the present changes seek a restoration of basics begs a historical question: for most students these basics never were there. Although it is wide of the point here, there is some doubt whether they were there even for the comparatively few high school students of the nineteenth century. Michael Kirst writes that "those who believe that 'back to basics' means a return to a nineteenth century model of schools focused wholly upon the development of the intellect have mistaken the nature of nineteenth-century schooling."[1]

Taken out of its historical context, this can become a damning indictment. But American schools have always been particularly susceptible to cultural forces. Raymond Callahan, whose interest is educators' uncritical adoption of business values and practices (i.e., their romance with the cult of efficiency and Scientific Management) describes it this way:

> The story of [this] quarter century of American education [1900-1925] — a story of opportunity lost and the acceptance by educational administrators of an inappropriate philosophy [Scientific Management] — must be seen within the larger context of the forces and events which were shaping American society. For while the schools everywhere reflect to some extent the culture of which they are a part and respond to forces within that culture, the American public schools, because of the nature of their pattern of organization, support, and control, were especially vulnerable and responded quickly to the strongest social forces. In this period as in the decades immediately preceding it, the most powerful force was industrialism — the application of mechanical power to the production of goods — and along with that the economic philosophy of the free enterprise, capitalistic system under which industrialism developed in America.[2]

Callahan's focus is administrative practice, although he also laments the shift from community control of the schools to the control of the professionals which was necessitated at least in part, he insists, by the exceptional vulnerability of the schools to local demands and too much community influence.

The role of the schools was as much an issue at the turn of the century as it is at present. Presaging more recent history, the National Education Association's "Committee of Ten" headed by Harvard President George W. Eliot was empaneled in 1893 to resolve it. At the center of the concerns were the classical curriculum and increasing vocationalism in the schools. Its study, "Report of the Committee on Secondary School Studies," revealed a preference for academic studies predicated on a belief that, "All high school students should be educated with equal seriousness in the great areas of human knowledge, and that occupational decisions should be put off until graduation, lest students from poorer homes lose out."[3]

The committee's report was more a product of logic and opinion than research, and it had effects similar to those of study committees in more recent times — focusing attention, generating comment, and revising the educational agenda. But also like many of its modern counterparts, because it went too far for the classicists and not far enough for the utilitarians, it alienated people on almost every side while winning few friends.

The Eliot Thesis was a promising start, but that dream died virtually aborning as anxieties over the system's capacity to adjust to the demands of mass education began to prevail. Among the more outspoken critics was President G. Stanley Hall of Clark University, who in 1901 called upon the high schools to direct their programs to the majority who would start but not finish their studies instead of to the few who would continue to college. Contrary to Eliot's position, Hall felt that not all students needed an academic program — rather, only short courses to prepare them for work.[4]

This theme was amplified by a subsequent National Education Association panel, the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education, whose position was expressed in 1918 in the *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education*. It declared that the high school curriculum should focus on "health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home-membership, vocations, citizenship, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character."[5] Only after descriptive references to the virtues of home, health, citizenship, and work did the recommendations turn to academics: "There are various processes, such as reading, writing, arithmetical computations, and oral and written expression, that are needed as tools in the affairs of life. Consequently, command of these fundamental processes, while not an end in itself, is nevertheless an indispensable objective."[6]

The social efficiency argument was to become "the cornerstone of [educational] Progressivism" in American public education and the paramount educational value of the first half of the twentieth century.[7] The term "progressivism" came from the progressive social movement and the allegiance to pragmatism and efficiency it characterized in the period between the 1890s and the First World War.

Although the emphasis was new, many of these attributes, (especially social relevance) were in evidence in the American educational philosophy of the time. "From the one-room school of rural communities to the graded school of towns and cities, town and country schools were designed for the same end: to give pupils a basic elementary education that would fit them for participation in political life and for entrance into the world of work."[8]

For educators, student choice was an important consideration (as it remains today), since it was believed that if students could select their courses and their curriculum their interest, involvement, and attendance would increase. Advocates did not necessarily expect the onset of an educational variant of Gresham's Law, as "student choice within a curriculum offering varying levels of difficulty . . . [drove] out the harder courses . . ."[9] Nevertheless, the whole curriculum ultimately was affected. Early victims were courses in Latin, Greek, and foreign history, considered of little use to residents of this continent: "The battles were fierce, but classical languages and the history of foreign countries were well on their way out of the public high schools' required curriculum by the 1920s."[10]

By the end of the 1920s, many of the changes were in place, often in the form of survey courses for students not enrolled in the college preparation track, courses that offered general reviews of principles and little more. "The new surveys were both introductory and terminal. They were not a first step toward deeper knowledge but a passing glance on the way to more practical matters."[11]

Self-fulfilling presumptions respecting the relative learning capacities and social needs of students and the role of the school in meeting them were implicit in all of this. In the end,

> The [progressive] reforms . . . produced the worst of both worlds: new courses, content, and academic standards that were less intellectual and more practical, and a style of teaching that was as dull as reformers had once complained of in Latin and medieval history courses. There was one difference, though: it was much easier for students to get through. Schools could thus be more successful, at least in the sense of increasing both enrollment and graduation rates. Students seemed to be no more commited to or interested in classwork, but the reforms made it easier for them to finish. . . .
>
> [Thus,] the schools had failed to solve the problem of mass education in ways the reformers had hoped — by using better teaching and relevant courses to mobilize students' commitment to school. But by revising standards for grading and promotion so that students' success in school was only weakly related to their success in academic studies, the schools had succeeded anyway.[12]

All of this intensified in the ensuing years. If anything, the unfolding Great Depression exacerbated the dilemma of public education — how to cope with large numbers of students who would rather be somewhere else — as children were compelled to stay in school because of the lack of other alternatives. With the collapse of the economy, the limited employment market was having a paradoxical effect on public education. Lacking job opportunities, students were forced into high school programs designed to prepare them for job opportunities that were no longer there. The situation was complicated by restricted budgets and teacher staff reductions, forcing schools to make do with more limited resources.

While educational progressivism would not reach its zenith for two more decades, it was in this context that its intent was restated in the late 1930s for the members of the Association of Secondary School Principals, by B.L. Dobbs, who described the "majority" as "students of low intelligence who stayed in high school as a result of the steady rise in the compulsory school age and the lack of jobs." Diane Ravitch comments,

> In her [Dobbs'] view, not many adults needed specialized knowledge in mathematics and science, and only those who [could] profit from it should get it. Nor did they need a high level of reading comprehension, only enough to use as an 'essential tool' for newspaper and magazine fare. There [was] no reason to teach them classics, and they [did] not need much in the way of writing skills for the 'small amount of writing they [would] have to do.' Their courses in social science should be devoted to the present, since 'students of limited imagination' find no reality in the study of 'heroes long dead' or other nations. Their curriculum . . . should be based on their needs and interests and should be as lifelike as possible. What they needed to know [was] how to dress attractively, how to make friends with [members of] the opposite sex, and how to get a job.[13]

The scene was set for what one hopes was the ultimate expression of progressive education, "Education for Life Adjustment," introduced in a series of lectures by Charles Prosser in 1939. In the words of Barry Franklin, under Life Adjustment conceptions:

> English courses would not only teach students how to write letters but would also offer instruction in conducting polite conversations with friends. Social studies would instruct students not only about family sociology but also about how to behave on dates. Schools would replace reading about government and politics with more practical and interesting matters. Future housewives would be taught how to sew, prepare meals, and keep house, bringing science and mathematics usefully down to earth for girls. These ideas solved all of the hard pedagogical problems . . . by purging the idea of life experience of anything that was not utterly mundane.[14]

Prosser became the first major disciple of progressivism to refuse to respect a reserved place for college preparation courses in the high school curriculum. With impressive logic, he insisted that academic studies were useless even for college students. The practical curriculum for everyday living was the preferred direction for them as well.

Critics of Progressivism were never in short supply. Mortimer Adler, for example, had argued that the "progressive ideal" provided a "'feeble palliative' which encouraged [the community] to evade its problems and would corrupt the schools by diverting their energies 'from the primary task of the basic intellectual disciplines'."[15] But they were never organized, since most pursued careers on college campuses. Still, education for Life Adjustment and the attack on the college preparation track provided the missing organizing ingredient. The reaction was triggered by Illinois' Arthur Bestor in his 1953 denunciation of the secondary curriculum:[16]

> The educationists were profoundly wrong because they denied that the purpose of the schools was to teach 'the power to think.' . . . The very essence of democracy is that all citizens are entitled to receive the liberal education that was once reserved for the privileged few; ***because they rejected this basic premise, because they believed that many or most high school students lack the capacity to benefit from intellectual training, [they] had betrayed the ideal of democratic education.***
>
> It is a curiously ostrich-like way of meeting life needs to de-emphasize foreign languages during a period of world war and postwar global tension, and to de-emphasize mathematics at precisely the time when the nation's security has come to depend on Einstein's equation. . . ."[17]

Progressivism soon found itself progressively on the defensive and, for many, the launching of Sputnik seemed to mark its end or, if not that, at least the end of the Great Debate. The National Defense Education Act was enacted, and federal funds were made available for programs in mathematics, science, foreign languages, and other fields with an international connection. Forgivable loan programs for teachers were established, correspondingly accompanied by college and university program changes that included the establishment of Master of Arts in Teaching programs specifically intended to entice bright students into teaching careers.

The period also witnessed the entry of the National Science Foundation into secondary school issues with NSF-funded curriculum revision projects that led to the "new math," and the "new social studies" as well as to revisions in the natural science curriculum. "With funds from foundations and government, school systems experimented with new . . . curricula, new patterns of staffing and scheduling, new ways of training teachers, and new technology."[18]

The experience is instructive. To almost everyone's retrospective surprise, these reforms were not to last. Indeed, during this period of curricular innovation, "Most teachers continued to work in traditional ways. . . . The teaching methods on which [they] had been brought up simply swamped the innovative approaches of the new books."[19] An equally important factor rested in the attitudes of university academic faculties toward education departments. Few would encourage their bright students into teaching careers.[20] Intellectual insouciance found expression in other ways, as academic faculty attempted to develop curriculum materials that would be impervious to classroom teacher incompetence, neither involving teachers in their development, nor working with them to help improve their understanding and use of them. The result, in the classrooms and in the colleges of education, was mutual hostility. Academic faculty were preparing texts intended to provide students with the knowledge they needed to understand a field, while educational faculty refused to adapt the manner in which they prepared classroom teachers to the new strategies.

Finally, after everything, the new materials were not directed to the full spectrum of high school students. Antipathy toward Education for Life Adjustment was strong among the reformers, but their materials were written for students who would continue their studies into college. They were never intended for students in the general and vocational tracks. The result was disjointed, and progressive education continued to influence the school curriculum.

So it was that the post-Sputnik reforms proved less enduring than their frequent reference in the literature warrants. Most were soon displaced by the Civil Rights Movement following in sequential order, but problems with the reforms of the late fifties and early sixties were such that their persistence would have been problematic at best.

Secondary school enrollments continued to increase during this period, and those among Black students even more. High school dropouts once again became a special concern as the economy provided more options for employment. Once more the main coping device was the curriculum. Courses in everyday living continued to occupy a major part of the whole: "The differentiated curriculum [Selective Excellence] made it possible for secondary schools to accommodate demands for improvements at the top while still continuing the older, massive commitment to a weaker curriculum for everyone else."[21] Tracks, an emphasis on unfettered student choice, and "horizontal" and "vertical" options of almost infinite variety soon stimulated the use of consumption metaphors ranging from "cafeterias" and "smorgasbords" to the more recent "educational shopping malls" to describe the situation.

While this was occurring, colleges and universities reduced admission standards in a desire to provide open access to all who might benefit. The community college movement gathered steam, multiplying the higher education opportunities that would be open to all students, irrespective of previous academic achievement. High school students and their teachers soon realized that it was unnecessary to achieve high grades and complete a pre-college curriculum to get into college, and any pressure for school reform was quickly relieved. As the colleges and universities eased their admissions requirements, the high schools eased their graduation requirements.

All of this was occurring in the context of urban riots, campus unrest, Vietnam uncertainties, and an educational and social search for relevance. Into this milieu entered (or out of it came) a New Progressivism, in the form of the "open education movement" with its emphasis on the child-centered curriculum, schools without walls, facilitators, off-campus and independent study, unstructured programs, the elimination of grades, and a retreat from the conventional into the mists of the "nontraditional." It meant:

> [An emphasis on] the students' role in selecting their own activities; the introduction of student-designed and student-taught courses; the elimination of traditional high school graduation requirements; the replacement of traditional subject-matter courses with courses and mini-courses organized around student interests; expansion of the number of courses and activities available to the student; flexible scheduling; . . . academic credit for off-campus programs, community involvement, and nontraditional study.[22]

By "the middle 1960s, a great many parents [knew] that something was going awry in the schools [and] that school authorities were not doing very much about it; that courses in math, science, and language were disappearing; [and] that students were rarely asked to write and were given little work to bring home."[23]

Demands for more attention to academics in high school were beginning to gain expression in districts across the land by the mid-1970s. A 1975 College Board report that test scores had been in steady decline for a decade fueled these anxieties. In 1977, the Board's blue-ribbon panel reported that though the causes of the score declines were many and complex, they certainly included "(1) that less thoughtful and critical reading is now being demanded and done, and (2) that careful writing has apparently gone out of style."[24]

Actions at the state level began to build. According to Arthur Wise:

> [Demand for] educational achievement resulted in the enactment of at least seventy-three laws between 1963 and 1974. These laws clearly revealed a concern for ensuring educational achievement rather than for providing educational opportunities, and a concern for adequacy rather than equality.[25]

Much attention was directed to student testing. Colorado passed its Educational Accountability Act of 1971 to "define and measure quality in education." Accountability laws in Florida were enacted each year between 1969 and 1976. The 1971 version directed the state commissioner of education to establish "grade-by-grade standards in the basic skills and to use tests based on specific theories of testing." A 1971 California enactment established requirements for teacher evaluations and specified that they be based upon competence.[26]

Florida's Educational Accountability Act of 1976 was one of the more comprehensive programs of minimal competency testing legislation enacted to that point. One of the act's objectives was to "Guarantee to each student in Florida instructional programs which meet minimum performance standards . . . ." Another was to acquire information about the performance of the ". . . system [in] . . . providing effective, meaningful, and relevant educational experiences designed to give students at least the minimum skills necessary to function and survive in today's society."[27]

The expansion of state testing requirements was occurring at the same time as the national school finance reform movement, which had equalization of educational expenditures among districts within a state as its goal. Lack of equity was a function of the historical pattern of local control and reliance upon local levies as a major source of school funding. As different districts had different taxing capacities (by virtue of differences in property values), in some not only was the innate taxing capacity greater, but the degree of effort required to fund education considerably less. With more money to spend, rich districts could maintain programs that were beyond the capacity of the poorer districts. The issue quickly devolved to a question of access to educational programs of comparable high quality [begging the question of a necessary connection between high support levels and high program quality]. The reform case was often argued on the grounds of the Equal Protection Clause.

Between 1968 and 1983, school finance reform cases were heard in 27 states. Seventeen made it to the highest state courts, where in eight the existing systems were found to be constitutional, and in nine they were considered unconstitutional.[28]

Several cases involved states addressed in the present study, one of which, ***San Antonio*** v. ***Rodriguez***, a Texas case, made it to the U.S. Supreme Court where the state system was upheld as sufficient to ensure an adequate education. Here, as Arthur Wise pointedly notes, the referent was a "minimum" educational offering, (a "basic" education). The emphasis was on minimums, and the test was whether each child had an opportunity to acquire "basic minimal skills."[29]

In Washington State, the courts ultimately forced state assumption of full responsibility for school funding, raising a number of still unresolved questions about the division of responsibilities among the Legislature, the State Board of Education, and the local districts. Actually, prompted by the developing court actions, the Washington Legislature acted before the final decision, through the enactment of the 1977 Basic Education Act, which defined basic education in terms of learning goals and the amount of time to be devoted to each. The result is an interesting example of what can happen when a legislative body innocently jogs into the educational bramblebush. According to the act:

> The goal of the Basic Education Act for the schools [is] to provide students with the opportunity to achieve those skills which are generally recognized as requisite to learning. [They] include the following:
>
> (1) To distinguish, interpret and make use of words, numbers and other symbols, including sound, colors, shapes, and textures;
> (2) To organize words and other symbols into acceptable verbal and nonverbal forms of expression, and numbers into their appropriate functions;
> (3) To perform intellectual functions such as problem solving, decision-making, goal setting, selecting,

> planning, predicting, experimenting, ordering, and evaluating; and
>
> (4) To use various muscles necessary for coordinating physical and mental functions.[30]

These skills are converted into classroom programs through minimum percentages of instruction devoted to them in the respective grades — 90 percent in grades 1-3, 85 percent in grades 4-6, 80 percent in grades 7-8, and 55 percent in grades 9-12 — and finally into more conventional expressions as the percentages are applied to:

> total program hour offerings . . . in the basic skills areas of reading/language arts (which may include foreign languages), mathematics, social studies, science, music, art, health and physical education. [In grades 9-12] a minimum of 15 percent of the total program hour offerings shall be in the area of work skills, and an additional ten percent in the areas of basic and/or [sic] work skills.

This is close to what Arthur Wise probably had in mind when he wrote about legislative prescription.

Meanwhile, other states also were fiddling with reform. In Illinois an assessment of the relationship between state and local responsibilities commenced with the Governor's call for a review of the effects of statutory mandates on localities (not only school districts, but all governmental subdivisions). In education the issue involved conditions dating from an 1845 legislative declaration of what students should learn ("what teachers were trained to teach" [!]) By the end of the century, curricular variations in a state with more than 12,000 school districts were so pronounced that the state superintendent mandated a course of study, and this became the vehicle for numerous subsequent additions of highly specific requirements "often lacking any grounding in educational theory."[31] Local boards and administrators railed at the number and breadth of the state mandates and diminishing district flexibility while advocates of special interests continued to propose new and expanded statutory requirements.

The mandation issue was not settled with the Governor's Committee's report, but it did achieve a place on the state's policy agenda. In 1981 the State Board of Education approved a comprehensive study of the subject. The subsequent staff reports were critical of the extent to which state directives had been developed without adequate respect for the ability of the districts to achieve them. The reports set in motion the steps that culminated in the Legislative Select Commission on the Improvement of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Illinois' school improvement program of the 1980s.[32] With respect to other states, Florida was also addressing increased graduation requirements and longer school days. Georgia appointed a governor's task force on education, and an Indiana task force completed its recommendations on teacher recruitment, recommending loans for exceptional candidates. In Mississippi, the Legislature met in a 1982 special session to consider statewide mandatory kindergarten, compulsory school attendance, a reading aid program for the early elementary years, more rigorous teacher certification standards, a principal training academy, teacher salary increases, and other components in an educational reform package to be funded through increases in state sales and income taxes. In North Carolina, the Legislature considered making the superintendent an appointed rather than elected official, consolidating districts (reducing them from 173 to 100), and a differentiated salary schedule for teachers. A Tennessee select committee called upon the state to assume responsibility for full funding of the basic education program and recommended a statewide testing program for all students, teacher salary increases, and differentiated pay for math and science teachers.

And so it went, leading to the 1980s and especially to 1983, "The Year of the Reports," when the recommendations of myriad national commissions and authors captured the national consciousness. Issued within a few months of each other, they blasted the condition of education and demanded reform in very similar terms, and in so doing they conveyed an implicit testimonial to a dramatic convergence of opinion.[33]

At the same time, while the reports are critical of American education, they are fairly kind: "There is considerable pointing to problems, but very little pointing of fingers."[34]

In identifying commonalities, the Education Commission of the States notes the following:

- All agree that the quality of education system must be improved now.
- All agree that quality and equity are inseparable issues.
- All agree that education is inextricably tied to larger social, political, and economic issues and that education renewal is the key to American renewal.
- All agree that local government, state government and the federal government have important roles to play.

- Most mention (and probably all agree) that schooling is only one facet of education in this country and that lifelong learning through a host of public and private institutions and personal means will continue to be as central to renewed vigor and productivity as are the schools.
- Most insist that schools and the community must work together. Most underscore the belief that the strength of the system lies in its decentralized structure and control by individual communities; communities will differ in their approaches to renewal and those differences will guarantee innovation, creativity, and imaginative solutions to problems.[35]

Some of these inferences may be a little overstated, perhaps especially the last, but the Education Commission of the States was not the only organization identifying commonalities. The Northeast Regional Exchange, in its report, "Education Under Study," speaks to five precepts about American education that characterize the reports:

- Education is correlated with social and economic development. Improved educational outcomes are essential for the economic and social well-being of the individual, and, therefore, of the nation.
- Quality education as a lifelong process is a universal right. The assumption is that quality schooling through the secondary years is the right of all youth and only the beginning of education. Colleges and other postsecondary training efforts must be linked to secondary schools.
- Public schools will continue as the mainstay of our society. Despite the pessimistic evaluations of public schools in the reports, none gives any serious consideration to alternatives to public schooling. Neither vouchers, tax rebates for private schooling, nor alternative schools with public sponsorship are addressed in any significant depth.
- Quality teachers and teaching underlie improved learning. Education as a high intensity 'industry' requires heavy investment in 'human capital.'
- Accountability and leadership must increase. Whereas critiques of the public schools of the earlier decades were prone to identify villains or weak links, these reports indict all sectors of society.[36]

By the end of 1983 any number of states were moving decisively in the direction of school reform. The cacophony of national alarums sounded in the midst of this. In most cases the state efforts were influenced by these initiatives; in others the effect was the opposite. The important thing is that something was happening. And so attention now turns to those actions, especially in the seven states that draw the focus of this report: California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington.

TWO

The Processes of Reform in the United States

> *"Who are you?" said the Caterpillar.*
>
> *This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied rather shyly, "I — I hardly know, sir, just at present — at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."*
>
> *"What do you mean by that?" said the Caterpillar sternly. "Explain yourself."*
>
> *"I cannot explain myself, I'm afraid sir," said Alice, "because I'm not myself, you see."*
>
> Lewis Carroll **Alice in Wonderland**

> *"Your priorities in choosing new ski boots should be:*
> *1. Comfort*
> *2. Performance*
> *3. Whether they match your ski suit or not."*
>
> Sue Klefos, Jay Peak, VT Ski Shop Manager

The specifics of the programs in each of the states during the reforms of the 1980s were distinctive, although there were recurrent themes. As with the recommendations of the national reports, the initiatives of the states cluster, with adjustments aimed at student achievement and professional improvement representing the two more popular categories and improved school management and effectiveness a frequent third.

Because they exemplify the possibilities for social change in the midst of widespread perceptions of policy stagnation and governmental inability to accomplish anything, some attention to the processes by which the reforms were accomplished is worthwhile.

In his lament on barriers to social change, Lester Thurow speaks of "the politics of confrontation" that develop as substantive responses elude society's conflict resolution capacity, and as programs intended to improve the general welfare are blocked by the vetoes of special interests. He argues that democracy requires a framework in which a substantial majority of concerned but disinterested citizens will prevent policies from being shaped by those who have a direct economic stake in them. As government begins to affect the lives of all, however, almost everyone acquires an interest in what it does and does not, and the pool of disinterested citizens shrinks accordingly. Solutions to domestic problems also used to presume that some minority would carry the burden of cost. The nation's political culture will no longer tolerate that solution.[1] The result is an atmosphere of political paralysis and a breakdown of representative systems, with issues either resolved by the courts or glossed with insipid and ineffective compromise.

Dominant values and mores always have facilitated or retarded the movement of issues onto the agenda and expedited or limited their tenure when they arrived, a fact Alexis DeTocqueville observed during his travels in this country more than 150 years ago.[2] Now it seems to be a matter of substantially increased degree. The phenomenon is described by one Washington State legislator as "political gridlock, where everyone is resistant to change while insisting on *his* program, which will be paid for, of course, by someone else."[3]

Gridlock and the politics of confrontation are not very far from "the politics of contraction" which are attributed to breakdowns in the presumed value consensus on which national unity has historically rested, breakdowns created by intransigent or intractable problems, economic and political, for which the strength and resources of this superpower bear little relevance. Vietnam, the oil embargo, anomic political tactics (terrorism), and, perhaps, the 55-mile speed limit are cases in point.[4]

These are prodigious hypotheses, arousing a disquieting feeling of governmental if not individual impotence. Yet, somehow in the face of it all, the state reform movements sometimes achieved comprehensive change (with appreciation of the relativity of this statement), often paid for with funds obtained from new tax programs, the traditional cul-de-sac of major policy initiatives. If nothing else, these experiences offer timely examples of what can be accomplished, what is gained and what is lost, and how the possibilities were realized.

Policy and process are usually linked, with the content of the former at least influenced by the form of the latter. A "rational-comprehensive" decision process, manifesting the classical components of goal identification, determination of satisfactory levels of goal achievement, review of alternatives, comparison of alternatives (with particular attention to costs and benefits), and selections that achieve the goals at the least costs, will probably lead to a much different set of policies than one that is more politically-oriented, or "non-rational," and which involves the dominance of prominent political figures and essentially political objectives.

Examples of rational-comprehensive processes in the educational reform process are few. Perhaps Colorado's and Washington's come closest, with their emphases on extensive (relatively) research efforts and *a priori* cost identification. Legislators in Washington, for example, were informed by the select commission at the onset of the 1985 session that the committee's reform program (K-12 through higher education) ultimately would require an additional $300 million a year, nearly a 12 percent increase in a budget that already comprised nearly two-thirds of the general fund total. The process immediately became noticeably incremental.

That seems to be the way it works. If synoptic change is the goal, a rational-comprehensive process is probably not the best route. All things equal, the magnitude of the change probably diminishes in proportion to the extent to which the model approaches this ideal. In most states the processes were different. In fairness, though, the hypothesis is difficult to prove, since magnitude of change is also a function of need for change, a variable that varies. This subject is discussed again later.

For the purposes of this report, the policy process is seen as involving four stages: (1) Problem Formation and Recognition; (2) Identification of Alternatives; (3) Selection from the Alternatives, Modification, and Adoption (conventionally considered the legislative process, but it also may entail executive decision, legislative action, or state board rule, among others); and (4) Implementation and Monitoring (with a feedback loop for subsequent adjustment).[5] Parts of the fourth stage are beyond the scope of this report, but references to implementation, oversight and certain speculations about the future of it all are not. All four stages overlap, and a clear line of demarcation from one to the other, especially among the first three, is difficult to define.

For the most part, the Problem Formation and Recognition stage in the subject states was rooted in reactions to early evidence of declining test scores (in turn, revealing the results of programs instituted in many states during the 1970s and undergirding the observation that the reforms of the 1970s and 1980s are linked). The national reports clearly were a factor. Also present was a search for state role clarification. In a few cases, elections brought new faces and perspectives to the fore, accommodating the emergence of education as an issue. In others it was financial crisis.

Other considerations include conditions within the state at the beginning of the decade. The southeastern states, which entered the reform period at comparatively low points on the national scales, and, among the study states, California, where per student support levels had slipped dramatically because of Proposition 13, approached the issue in a crisis mode. In states ranking higher in the comparisons, crisis could not always be cited, and the responses were sometimes more subdued.

Variances in state responses have created problems for classifiers. Among the study states, Texas, Illinois, Florida, California, and South Carolina are often considered "High Change" states. Washington and Colorado place in a more moderate change category. At the same time, in view of the different points at which states stood on the developmental scale at the beginning of the decade, such classifications may not say much. Few states have yet adopted programs as comprehensive and costly as Washington's 1977 Basic Education Act, with its attendant state assumption of the property tax and responsibility for full funding of the public schools. Hence, to place Washington in the Low-Change category may be misleading, since the distinction would hinge on the fact that much of its reform movement was out of sync with the rest of the nation. A similar statement could apply to Colorado with its 1971 district accountability program which has since grown into what may be one of the most extensive citizen involvement structures in the country.

John Goodlad, speaking of events following release of the 1984 national report, *The Nation Responds,* noted that newspapers at the time headlined stories ranking the states in terms of their reform efforts. Georgia was "Leading the Nation" in school reform, with 20 measures either implemented or under consideration. Colorado was found at the bottom of the list, since its legislature was not then contemplating action. The Colorado superintendent's (commissioner's) office was soon flooded with inquiries from concerned citizens demanding to know why the state was not doing better.

In most states, during the reforms of the eighties, education was treated as a distinctly political issue, and mobilization efforts often had a distinctively political character. Sometimes this affected both the depth and the range of the choices, as political imperatives demand slogans and easily-described, cost-contained, and symbol-accommodating solutions. In these states, much of the tactical plan was intended to limit, control, surmount, circumvent, or avoid the constraints of more conventional processes. This was realistic and effective, but it also led to subsequent criticism and suspicions that the reforms were over-simplified solutions to very complex problems.

Charismatic figures and distinctive leadership styles often were important. In many respects, the experiences of the states are case studies in political leadership. Examples involve officers of all types, political and professional, governors, lieutenant governors, state senators, representatives, and state school superintendents, as well as prominent citizens and figures from the educational and business sectors. Susan Furhman, referring to political interactions within the states as they proceeded with their reform programs, noted that governors tended to be very active initiators, and legislatures (rather than educators) dominated the reform processes. While the business community was highly visible, educational professionals were less involved, and departments of education were relegated to essentially analytical roles.[6]

The patterns in the seven states examined in this report support much of this, but with some important refinements. In most of the states, for example, the state superintendents and departments of education played far more decisive roles than is implied. Power can be defined both as the capacity to achieve change and the ability to channel or prevent it. When state school chiefs and education departments were not leading the reform efforts, they often were performing a less visible but nonetheless effective alternative role. State superintendents, who are particularly well-situated to combine public and professional interests, sometimes assumed the perspective of the educational community in opposition to legislatively-imposed reforms. Usually they did this effectively; in a few cases they did not, but they were only occasionally overrun by the reform train. This does not suggest a lack of involvement. In the admiring words of a Washington critic, "The state superintendent may not be able to get all he wants [from the legislature], but he will get more than anyone else, and he can damn well limit what others [in education] get."[7]

In most of the study states, political leaders from all points on the formal leadership spectrum — executive and legislative, elected, appointive, educational, business, and public — were significant participants. As Dr. Furhman's assessment implies, however, access and influence were not always even. At the same time, while individual leaders and governmental sectors were prominent, there was no instance in which anything less than a formidable coalition proved sufficient. No single figure was ever able to accomplish reform alone, and prior recognition of that fact seems to be an important aspect of an effective leadership style.

The prevailing process theories in this country are changing, and this is creating some tension.[8] Whereas "participatory decision-making" was the preferred model of the 1970s, modern concepts are more authoritarian, derived in large measure from the corporate leadership model and centering on definitions that embrace a vision and the capacity to mobilize support toward the achievement of that vision.

As the popular leadership paradigm is changing, so also are attitudes toward participation, and this can be a rub. Whether through misuse or because of intrinsically weak assumptions, many experiences with participatory models in the public sector have been less than inspiring. Too often they have involved processes that are shallow and results that are insipid — policy recommendations that are little more than the amalgamated uninformed opinions of people attending public meetings and participating in the consensus-formation processes the facilitators employ.

Increasingly, decision-makers are finding public participation as it has come to be practiced counterproductive. Clark Kerr may be one:

> The ambience of greater participation by more groups, each expecting consultation, can lead to exhausting multiple negotiations with less likelihood of results than earlier times.[9]

Educators love to classify things. Throughout the field interviews they used the terms "top-down" and "bottom-up" in reference to the reform processes in their and other states [usually their state's was "top-down"]. California, Florida, Texas, and Illinois were regularly placed in the top-down category, and South Carolina was viewed as a bottom-up change state [although not by all who spoke in that state]. Washington and Colorado usually were not classified, but at least in view of Colorado's emphasis on educational community initiatives it would seem to fit best in the bottom-up column.

Since these models seem important in the field, particularly with respect to receptivity to the reforms among educators, a few comments are devoted to them here. They should begin, however, with reference to the fact that prognostications over the endurance of the reforms were more often positive than negative in all of the states, top-down as well as bottom-up. This suggests that the relationship between perceived broadly-based change processes and program success may be overstated. In any case, the top-down classification implies uninformed programs politically imposed on the educational (or social) system in an authoritarian, low-participation mode. The bottom-up model envisions change proceeding upward from the schools to the state policy stage, and it suggests a high participation, interactive process. Problems accompany both, not the least of which are their judgmental connotations and the danger of the self-fulfilling prophesy, "bottom-up is good; top-down is bad." In the present case, the distinctions also may be too precious. All of the reform programs were devised at the state level, normally through political processes involving political executives and state legislatures. Of the seven subject state legislatures, five (California, Florida, Illinois, South Carolina, and Texas) enacted broad reform programs. Colorado's program is forming in the State Department of Education, i.e., the state level, and ultimately will involve the legislature. Action in Washington during the reform period centered on the legislature, as did the 1977 reforms. Thus, to this extent, all of these states are top-down.

Impressions of effective educational community participation in the change processes, direction of the information flow, etc., seem to govern the choice, and perceptions become therefore more important than reality. In South Carolina (the quintessential bottom-up state), the changes came through state-wide select committee processes and subsequent omnibus legislation, both of which accord with the top-down stereotype. This also was the case with Texas, which is labeled top-down with something approaching a vengeance.

Particularly relevant to the classification are impressions of effective educational community participation in the process. Here it needs to be stated that the determinant is not *general public* participation but a more limited form keying to the presence of education professionals. And, again, the point is whether or not there is the *perception* of such participation. Usually there was considerably more "input" from educators than was widely perceived. In every state reviewed, educators were the ultimate source of ideas for the new programs, although they rarely displayed awareness of this. In the words of a former staff member with the Washington select committee:

> The committee and its task forces met far more frequently than anyone initially expected. Over the two and one-half years they averaged a meeting a week. *All* of the people who offered testimony were educators or associated with education. All of the papers were prepared by the same kind of people. This is where the committee got all of its ideas. And this is why [educators'] insistence that [they] were not represented in the process is a little shrill. The ideas [for the committee report] came from the education field. [emphasis added]

This observer suggested that the traditional communications channels, lobbyists and association spokesmen, were not used in the committee process, and that seems to say it all. In each of the states, if representatives of education groups felt that their views, perhaps their priorities, were formally represented in the process, they seemed more comfortable and more willing to consider the decision and information flows as bottom-up: if not, then not.

In a few cases, educators were at least initially unwilling to accredit people as legitimate members of the education community. In California the reform program was promoted by a newly elected state school superintendent who worked through the state department and people at the district level, but who was considered a maverick by the establishment. California's program was duly labeled top-down.

Sometimes the involvement of educational leaders was obscured. In another conventionally classified top-down state, Illinois, the reform program evolved out of recommendations of the State Board of Education, which remained influential throughout, although few people seem to be aware of this.

Thus, the top-down/bottom-up distinction seems to hinge on the extent of perceived [professional] participation, but, in truth, most participatory processes are not very efficacious, and most political processes are more informed by public and professional opinion than generally recognized.

If the South Carolina and Colorado experiences are any indication, the more effective participatory structures involve citizen advisory panels and implementation councils as mechanisms to receive, interpret, and implement state policies. This entails a two-way informational flow, with the emphasis on the downward side. And this seems to make sense. Assuming that state-level decision-makers, political and other, will view it in their own interests to make themselves aware of public and professional opinions, a promising role for formal associations and advisory structures would be as linkages (with both interpretive and feedback functions) between the state and the locality in the implementation stages.

In any event, coalitions of political and professional interests were operating in every state, and this, too, is informative. Heavy may hang the head that wears the crown, and leaders may be lonely people, but they can accomplish little without help. So it was in the states, where one mark of effectiveness was the capacity to organize others toward a realization of the vision. In no case was an individual able to achieve a meaningful reform package alone.

Two coalition dimensions were apparent, one at the policy level (the "horizontal" dimension), the other bridging the state and the localities (the "vertical dimension"). On the horizontal plane, coalitions of members of the executive and legislative branches, the state school chief and the department of education, and, on the vertical dimension, coalitions of community leaders, board members, and professional associations approach the theoretically optimal form. At the risk of positing a palpable tautology, the probabilities of success improved immeasurably if the governor, legislative leaders, the superintendent, the education department, teacher and other professional organizations, and community leaders, including representatives of the business sector, were represented in the coalitions. This optimal arrangement, combining both the horizontal and vertical coalitions, is predictably designated the "T Formation."[10] As an ideal form, there were no instances in which it was fully realized, although among the study states, South Carolina may have come closest. And here, as suggested above, the important dynamic for the vertical coalition was downward through implementation councils to convey and interpret the state policy initiatives to the localities.

With respect to other considerations, the economic imperative — economic development — provided an important symbol in all of the states. Sometimes it proved to be the catalyst. Michael Kirst posits that "Toyota replaced Sputnik as the symbol of American concern. The genesis of reform lies in the states' interest in economic development and growth, and education is at the heart of it."[11]

While economic considerations and business involvement were significant, much to the surprise of advocates of vocational education, business interests were not as unflinching in their support as they once had been. Rather, they were frequently ambivalent and occasionally hostile, as they called for high school programs that prepared students in academics, insisting that industry or postsecondary education were more appropriate places than the schools to impart vocational skills. The role of the high schools was to bring students to sufficient levels of literacy to receive such training. The net effect of the new high school graduation requirements may be a reduction in the curricular range, and, by extension, school goals, as time limitations and course enrollment shifts drive out courses that cannot be used for graduation. Such a situation would display ironical commonalities with an earlier era when an emphasis on social relevance and life adjustment had the effect of driving out academic courses.[12]

By and large, reactions to the contributions of the business sector are mixed. To many, business seemed to telegraph a priori skepticism of school program effectiveness while stressing accountability, positive cost-benefit relationships, and sometimes unpopular programs. Intentionally or not, business representatives also seemed to convey a conviction that teacher unionism was dysfunctional to effective schools and smugness that for some seemed to border on Babbittry.

Business representatives' stress on merit pay, career ladders, and evaluation, though far from misplaced, were not among the most energizing of ideas within the educational community. Much of the lack of enthusiasm among teachers ultimately traces to a conviction that these proposals were management-oriented and anti-union.

Even so, without active business support, the reform programs could not have been established. Business leaders contributed their time and resources and played a crucial role in achieving legislative support for the taxing programs needed to sustain the educational changes in many of the states.

Teachers' unions were active in most of the reform movements, but they were not as prominent as other sectors, and they were too often seen as forces to be overpowered or reduced than as allies to be mobilized in support of reform. An important union priority is more pay allocated through salary systems based on seniority. American business entered stage right calling for salary adjustments based on merit. Thus, the two were on a collision course from the beginning. There were a few instances where unions, usually American Federation of Teacher affiliates (such as in Texas and Florida), appeared to accept the principle of differentiated salary systems, and there were instances of active and positive union participation in select committee processes (e.g., Illinois). But the reform initiatives were generally not union-accommodating.

Sometimes neutralization of unions was sought with money for general salary increases to offset some of the more unpalatable offerings. The unions also appeared to be caught off guard by the intensity and the persistence of the demands for change. By the time the leaders realized that the phenomenon was not fleeting, their opportunities to participate in the idea aggregation and articulation phases were passed or denied, and they had to focus energies on adjustments and modifications in the legislative process. This was not always the case, of course, as in some states (e.g., Washington) the union role was active and influential throughout. It also needs to be stated that like so many other organizations, teachers' unions are not monolithic. Titles notwithstanding, they are more confederations than federations, and as separate state organizations they pursue different strategies.

Attitudes about education unions are strong, with more than one person interviewed attributing a substantial portion of the present ills of education to them. Such criticism is unfair. While teachers' unions may embody a logical contradiction for a vocation in search of professional recognition, they are what the teachers want. Perceptions that they operate only in limited spheres of narrowly defined self-interest can be mitigated by numerous examples of union interest in improved educational effectiveness.

Another influence in the change processes was the select committee. Sometimes perceiving the educational establishment as intransigent on issues of reform (perhaps generalizing a bit too much), and sometimes in the Anglican tradition of royal commissions to delay, diffuse, and defuse, policy-makers frequently established select committees and commissions to point the way. Popular at the national level (e.g., the National Committee on Educational Excellence), study panels also were active in the states, sometimes charged with the macro assignment of examining the entire educational system, other times assigned a more manageable component such as the preparation, recruitment, or retention of teachers.

Study committees were a factor in some form in all of the subject states, but those that proved to be the most influential had clear ties to the political process through the active presence and support of the executive and legislative leadership on the committee. If this were augmented with the support of the state department of education, the probabilities of success increased. All of this is to say that the study committees no less than any other participant needed to be part of a grand coalition to succeed.

These observations and perhaps others will become more evident in the descriptions of the change processes of the seven states. Perhaps it is best to shift to a discussion of those processes at this point. Here the narrative style changes. Since the subject concerns political processes, there are few documented sources of information, and the material must be drawn from the experiences of the people who were present. The summaries that follow, therefore, are excerpted from the transcripts of the field interviews, with the selected statements presented in a generally chronological order following a brief synopsis. The story is told, in other words, through the impressions of those who were there. In some instances these people are in sensitive positions, and in others the issues are highly political, so in the interest of the confidentiality sometimes requested, only general references are used (i.e., the particular office or affiliation of the interviewee, such as "Legislature," "Governor," "University," "Teachers' Union," and so on). Citations usually appear in brackets immediately following the quotation. Subsequent sections will return to the more conventional style.

California was at the forefront of the education reform effort, as the debates over educational quality enormously increased public interest in the electoral race for state superintendent that transpired in the autumn months of 1982. It is a good place to begin.

THE PROCESSES OF REFORM IN THE UNITED STATES

California

"He's just not your cookie-cutter kind of guy!"

The education reform process in California became visible during the debates surrounding the race for state superintendent in 1982. Auguring a shift from federal compliance to student achievement as the dominant theme, the leading figure in the subsequent reform peregrinations was the winner of that race, Superintendent William Honig, who, with the governor and key members of the state legislature, formed the policy coalition that proved instrumental to the enactment of an omnibus education reform bill, Senate Bill 813, in the 1983 session.

It was the presence of a dedicated reformer, some describe as a "True Believer," rather than the release of a blue-ribbon study committee report or the national call signaled by A Nation at Risk *that provided the catalytic spark in California. The passage of SB 813, in fact, predated the national reports.*

Business was a significant force. The California Business Roundtable commissioned a report on public education and played an important supporting role in the election of the new superintendent. Its report received widespread attention, particularly in the early weeks, and it seems to have been a factor of some importance in the program proposed by the new superintendent.

While the state has proceeded to use the reports and recommendations of subsequent study panels investigating particular educational issues (e.g., the teaching profession), the changes contained in SB 813 were based more on ideas offered by the superintendent and key legislative members (many of whom had extensive experience and association with the state's educational system) than on research reports. The solutions were pragmatic, sometimes political. A metaphor of a train leaving the station with people throwing on baggage is frequently used to describe both the progress and the resultant bill.

California is considered a "High-Change" state, and its program is widely viewed as "Top-Down." Yet, the educational reform movement was led by a popularly elected state school chief running on a popular reform program. California's experience probably comes as close to a modern *populist reform movement as any in the country. The program also was influenced by legislators, some of whom are former teachers with strong backgrounds and interests in public education. Representatives of various professional education interests report that their opinions were heard, and it is clear that the legislation was at least in some measure influenced by these interests.*

Student achievement and school effectiveness measures characterized most of the program. School construction and teacher-related issues appear to be major items on the remaining education agenda. For present purposes, the California experience commences with comments about the general retreat from state control and standards exemplified in their 1968 eradication, when the Legislature enacted "Senate Bill One, which was the Magna Charta *of public education, stripping out every curriculum requirement in the law." [Education Consultant] A related factor was the imposition of revenue limits in the early seventies, ultimately leading to the passage of Proposition 13 and succeeding program cutbacks in the schools.*

"After Proposition 13, we found that high school students were taking no more than three or four subjects a day; graduation requirements were reduced, and, by the early 1980s, we were seeing the results in test scores and the complaints of employers." [Teachers' Union Officer]

"We lost our way in education. We forgot what we were supposed to be doing. We forgot the fundamentals." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"We knew that the system had deteriorated so badly that we had the largest classes in the country. We had dropped from 10th to 33rd. We had textbooks that still talked about someday going to the moon. It began to seep into the public consciousness. The analysis was comparative to other states. Oregon was spending a third more per kid — Oregon! That shows you the condition we were in. For about 15 years, education really drifted and did not keep up with any of the indicators (cost of government, cost of living); it really did not get its share. We had a governor that did not want to spend, and a state that was broke." [University Professor]

The former California State Superintendent was a popular figure, viewed as a defender of the rights of the underserved. The state program under his administration acquired a putative emphasis on compliance, an emphasis viewed by many in California as out of harmony with the shifting demands of the 1980s.

"The Riles' (Honig's predecessor and opponent in the 1982 campaign) Administration viewed the state as the appropriate protector of underserved children. So it's not surprising that the programs of the 1970s came out of the 1960s. Everything became process oriented, because curriculum was not viewed as the proper province of the state. Instead, the curriculum was felt to be the only prerogative left to the local boards. Riles' reform movement was heavy on accountability and evaluation but very light on mandates, and all of this worked well for the elementary grades, which were the focus of the effort, because elementary teachers have a tendency to be less content oriented. ['Teachers teach kids in the elementary schools; they teach subjects at the high school level']. The reform movement of the '80s and the shift to the secondary schools was really only an extension of that. I think it was not merely coincidental that Honig came in on a wave of criticism of the failure of the high schools and a heavy content bias." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"I am intrigued by Anthony Down's [Note, "Up and Down with Ecology — The Issue-Attention Cycle," *The Public Interest* Vol. 28 (Summer, 1972)] concept of issue identification, particularly the first part involving problem building, when there is not wide public consciousness of low achievement. The problem built all during Wilson Riles' term. His agenda was equity, with little attention to efficiency or productivity." [University Professor]

The shift became progressively more apparent during the 1982 electoral campaign.

"All of this seemed to come together during the election campaign. I'm still not sure how it happened, or even why. Honig was well-financed and launched a carefully-crafted campaign. You could see the momentum building. Economic uncertainty contributed; there was both inflation and depression. This raised questions concerning the utility of education. Fears of a teacher shortage also were present." [University Professor]

"The catalyst was Bill Honig, a classical intellectual True Believer, who also was wealthy. A lot of this would have happened without him, but he came along at the right time and spent part of his considerable personal fortune on getting elected." [University Researcher]

"Until Honig, it was not considered possible to do any major reform in the K-12 system in California. There was the California Teachers' Association, the administrators, and deadlock in the Legislature. This was the attitude in 1981-82." [Legislature]

"Honig catalyzed public opinion in 1982 in a manner reminiscent of JFK in 1961." [University Researcher]

"Honig's ideas evolved, influenced the members of the Legislature, and the result was SB 813." [University Administrator]

"When he beat Riles he knocked off a very popular three-term incumbent. He came from nowhere. He's such a maverick. He was a teacher, but not really, out of a Teacher Corps' program, not really part of the school organization; a superintendent, but a small district where he received no organizational experience. An acquaintanceship with Jerry Brown got him on the state school board. He runs for office in a mode that would have been impossible for anyone who did not have great personal wealth or access to it. He's not a planner, but he runs an unusually sophisticated media campaign. . . . I don't know of anyone else like him and still don't, maybe some who are as smart but not as flamboyant. The teachers never knew how to handle him, and still don't." [Department of Education Staff]

William Honig's personal qualities evoke widespread and usually favorable comment.

"The educational groups never encountered anything like this. Everybody before had patterns. You knew where they were. Honig can't sit still for five minutes. Here is a chief state school officer who actually reads. He loves to argue. He has a law degree. He learns through the adversarial process. He will change his position if you argue with him. If you don't argue with him, he will assume you; he will just steamroller over you. When he says he is going to take 11 prospective science books home to read them, he does!" [University Professor]

"There is a level of energy, and if he were in this room, we would be on *his* agenda." [University Researcher]

"He is sort of a Jeffersonian. He believes that schools are solutions to a lot of our problems. If they don't get better, we lose the democratic government and society we live in. I first met him when he was a state board member. He was complaining then that the board and superintendent should be spending their time on curriculum and what kids should learn instead of fiddling around with categorical programs and at the margin. I think they were, and I think this was typical of the national education establishment." [Department of Education Official]

"On the one hand he has a million ideas; on the other, a clear vision. His strategy is simple: you define what kids should know, you define a core curriculum, the foundation, the basics, whether you go to college or what, the minimum a person with a high school education should leave with. Then you look for levers. Assessment? So you test for it! Training programs? You influence pre-service education, administrator training! Everything spins from the core. You re-focus the attention of administrators on what is important — curriculum and instruction." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"Honig's strategy was to hit the system on all fronts at the same time. His approach was not strategic in the sense of a well-conceived and developed plan for improving education, but it may have been the most appropriate when one is moving on a bureaucracy and wants to change the debate. In this instance, the incremental does not work. He's paralyzing his foes. He is charismatic, both an insider and an outsider at the same time. He seeks to de-stabilize the system. What you see is what you get!" [University Administrator]

"I have to give credit to Honig, who started using reform as a political slogan, but he was talking about basics and a lot of rhetoric, because he was saying it did not require a lot of money. We thought some of his plans for reform were naive, and we tried to tell him this, that he wasn't addressing the financial implications." [Teachers' Union Official]

"Bill Honig is a little wacko, but he's a good cheerleader and enthusiastic." [Legislature]

The influence of other participants varied. Business had an effective voice in the reforms, but the education associations, especially the teachers' unions, are viewed inaccurately as initially hostile and unprepared.

"The California Business Roundtable report was not given a lot of attention. This may have been because other things were happening. Honig seized it." [University Professor]

"The national economic concern prompted the entry of the business community in a major way and in a much more sophisticated manner than in other states. The California Business Roundtable's position was, 'we're not going to fool around with a lot of micro details; let's see how we can lift the system up.' So it was much more of a macro political strategy. The approach must be broad, systematic, and involve wide intervention on multiple fronts, and a lot of money infusion. The view was that the infrastructure had eroded. You had to build this up; you couldn't just fool around with a few programs, a few gimmicks, like an administrator academy and a career ladder. So, business backed Honig. One of business' early views was they were not sure what to do about the education system. One thing they wanted to do was get Wilson Riles the hell out of there, and they were willing to pay for it. They wanted Honig in there. They focused on politics and on leadership, and they signalled flexibility on all details." [University Professor]

"The education establishment did not have much to say in the bill [SB 813]. The school administrators and to a lesser extent teachers were trying to protect themselves, picking out pieces that were particularly unattractive to them, but they did not have much influence. The real influence in terms of [program] content came from Honig and the business community. There was no way Honig or the educational establishment could have got it done without the strong support of the chief executive officers of the major corporations in the state: the Business Roundtable. They also were influential in his campaign." [Department of Education Official]

"The education groups are powerful as long as it's in a circumscribed way. On a single bill, a single issue, they can be heard. But SB 813 became a big public item and it was taken away from them. Money had a lot to do with it; the promise of money was what neutralized [the professional associations]." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"We [the teachers' unions] were being viewed as antagonistic, but we had been promoting educational reform for some time, but no one was listening. So here comes this train with none of our cars. We said we can't be constantly defensive; we have to be pro-active. Our program was to make things we didn't like a little more palatable. We have found this to be a better strategy. We can get better press, more support, than we can by stonewalling." [Teachers' Union Official]

"One of the most interesting things is the way the unions' approach to reform changed in the last several years. It is almost as if they said it is better to be inside than outside of all of this." [University Researcher]

"The unions have lost a lot of power because of their loss of public prestige. The unions were a bit of a liability for many legislators. A governor was also here who did not give a shit about teacher unions. The Democrat majority in each house had to deal with the Republicans to get any money bills out. They [the unions] tried to make the best of the deal, and there is very little in there [SB 813] that is going to hurt them: mentor teachers and easier dismissal terms, which turn out not to have been very powerful at all. They also did not have the clout and contacts in the governor's office. [Department of Education Official]

"Essentially they were neutralized by money. The trade was, the union leadership here realized if you are going to get something, you are going to have to give something. Honig did it by stressing reform and money, not one without the other, and the teacher's organizations saw that as a winner. They saw goodies and calculated they could take care of the downside later; dismissals, personnel things, they could water those down through court suits and collective bargaining, and this is exactly what they have done. So they felt they were giving up some things, such as longer days, for a pay raise. The unions can be dealt with. It is the school boards that are surprisingly weak. Those guys don't have their acts together. They are divided among themselves, and they will be the bigger losers over time." [University Professor]

Finally, "The California Teachers Association was not a supporter, but Honig gallantly met with them soon after the election." [University Administrator]

The Governor was another important figure, but his initial presence was not as strong as others, perhaps because he was new and perhaps because by definition his influence would become more important as the time for political action approached.

"Senate Bill 813 came about with some degree of coincidence. We had a newly elected state superintendent who had run on a reform platform. At the same time, we elected a governor whose highest priority was education. Honig built up the public momentum, particularly with parent groups. Thousands would come to high school rallies. He has continued to do this. So when the Legislature came back [to Sacramento] with a new governor, a new superintendent, legislators jumped on the bandwagon, and out of that came this convoluted thing called 813. The governor's office did not have a program; it came out of the Legislature and Honig. The governor made some modifications, and since then we've had a program, but not in the first few months." [Legislature]

"The governor could do nothing without the Legislature, and we all had to go together, including Honig, or we were going to go nowhere." [Teachers' Union Official]

"Honig's ideas evolved and influenced the members of the Legislature; the result was SB 813. The governor was the reluctant dragon, always draggin' [sic] his feet." [University Professor]

As the train began to move, as the reform movement began to gather steam, legislative influence came into play, although most agree that the superintendent continued to perform an important role.

"All of a sudden it seemed possible. Honig had been elected. [Gary] Hart was appointed Chair of the Senate Education Committee and Teresa Hughes got the Chair in the House. Three important things came together all at once. Hughes and Hart had both been clamoring for change, and they began working immediately on an agenda for reform. Honig was working with [Representative Marian] Bergeson, so there were three measures coming together early in the 1983 session. From that point forward, to the passage of 813, reform was on its way." [Legislature]

"It was actually Gary Hart and Bill Honig that were very much involved in the specifics, much more than legislators and superintendents usually are. First because Gary is an old civics teacher, and Honig has definite ideas about those kinds of things. So I can remember them huddled over a table saying, look, even the exact language, and saying this and that, this ought to be changed, this ought to be more specific. And then Teresa Hughes had some definite ideas about foreign language, and that is how it went. Now the person who had the idea of what exactly ought to be the courses, you know, was Honig, together with Hart." [Legislature]

"Well, I have to go back to Hart being elected to the Senate and bringing many of his ideas that he had had for a number of years in the Assembly over to the Senate and having his request for the Education Committee Chair granted. Along about January, 1983, he indicated he wanted to have a comprehensive education bill. He felt that there ought to be a Senate vehicle and there ought to be some discussions with the assembly, get the leadership together and see just what kind of priority Education would receive. About this time he had some conversations with Teresa Hughes, who had some pragmatic ideas about what she wanted to push. And so Hart says, 'All right, I'll start a bill on my side, you start a bill on your side, and I will meet you in conference committee.' Hart started his with about $900 million; Hughes started hers with about $1.1 billion; they were only $200 million apart, and this wasn't significant. The governor, by the way, wanted $300 million. Hart then proceeded to meet with the various education advocacy groups separately and then collectively. His question was, 'If I put an item into the bill, will your organization freak out and try to kill it?' It was a strategy by exception. Hart was okay with people being displeased with some things, but he didn't want to get a kill signal from any organization while items were being negotiated. So Hart always looked at amendments from the standpoint of whether or not some organization in the education community would be so opposed that they would have to issue a kill signal on the bill. It was one way of holding the education community together." [Legislature]

"The governor did not see education as a priority until June or July, when he realized he wasn't going to get a budget until something was done with this monster called 813. There was a groundswell in the Legislature, and finally the governor and his people got interested. Consequently, the governor and his staff got into it pretty heavy with the conference committee along about mid-June, as we roared through the July 4th weekend. Meanwhile, Bill Honig was running up and down the state championing the cause of education. He does not work especially well here [in the legislative chambers], because this is largely an internal process. His creative value was making sure that the public, television, the editorial boards, the PTAs, the school groups rallying in every member's community, and he was a helleva salesman on it. He did a fantastic job out there, so that every time the legislators went back to their district they were confronted with sometimes thousands of people rallied for education, and here's Honig whipping up the crowds. So he's gotta be given a lot of credit for it. The fever kept up through the entire process." [Legislature]

"There was a ton of stuff tacked on. It was the first time education had ever been a budget buster. It was actually holding the whole budget hostage. This was not a thoughtful process; it was political. The motivation, though, was very thoughtful, and that's the part I agree with." [Education Consultant]

Even at this point, with much of the political coalition pretty well formed, the bill's passage was not assured. Acceptance of amendments with additional provisions helped to build legislative support, but also contributed to an image of sloppiness and feelings that more work would be needed to make the whole thing succeed. A little luck also helped.

"The only reason SB 813 passed was because the Governor and his budget people made a serious mistake. We had a declining enrollment, and we used to give the districts something called a '100 percent guarantee,' which meant that if they lost students, they wouldn't lose money. The governor took this out of the budget on that grounds that the state shouldn't pay for kids that were not there. The districts that were declining were the entire Republican establishment of California — Marin, Santa

Clara, Orange Counties, the Beach Cities. In order to pass the bill you needed 54 votes; ficure it out — it was a political issue." [Legislature]

"It's interesting, because it's a popular political movement. But personally I think it's gone too far. I think it went too far in 813, and what's interesting now, was that everybody knew the process was a political one. SB 813 got bigger than all of us, and what happened was that Honig's people tried to get as many people's pet idea in as possible to build a coalition, which, personally, I don't think was necessary. I think there are a number of things in 813 that are valuable, but there also are things that are horrible. Now, I think, there is a feeling forming that we want to do it a little differently." [Legislature]

"In my opinion, that convoluted thing called 813 moved so quickly because of public sentiment, but it was not well thought out. It was disjointed. There are more than 100 reforms in it, not necessarily all related. Some are accommodations and political compromises, literally, in the last hours. We needed all the votes we could get, so if someone wanted a pet, we got it. It ended up with some things that are pretty inconsequential, maybe even screwy. It's too early to tell." [Governor's Staff]

"I think we are on our way to constructive changes rather than Band-Aids here in California." [Teachers' Union Official]

"The bill had to have certain things in it to please divergent groups. Then, in addition, Teresa Hughes and Hart and Honig had their own agendas, things they wanted. And then there was a lot of stuff thrown in along the way. I don't think it has any overall consistency or conceptual beauty. It met the needs of those groups that could stop it. There are some things I don't think will make a lot of difference." [Legislature]

"There's a million things in 813, but the sum does not amount to anything; it's all symbolic. There's nothing to make a school better. The idea that sold the bill was trading reforms for money. More money in itself does not make a difference, but the schools were destitute. The Chinese ministry visiting here expressed surprise at how poor the schools were." [Department of Education Official]

"The reform movement came from a coalescing of political motivation and a lot of good sense felt by a lot of people. I really think the basic program came out of the Sacramento sphere of influence. A little came from a lot of different people. People would be horrified to discover how superficial the bases for many of these changes are, but there was a lot of discussion and debate. . . . I'm optimistic that after all of the smoke clears, the people at the school level will be more concerned about curriculum, there will be more concern about teachers, and these are good. We will have succeeded in raising the level of anxiety in a constructive sense." [Education Consultant]

"There will be no backlash, only a reaction to some of the gaps." [Department of Education Staff]

So it was in California. Just as one individual at the right time proved critical, so also was the case in South Carolina — the next state considered in this review. Similarly, in both instances, however, one person, no matter how charismatic, could only get the process going. A broader coalition had to be constructed if the enactments were to be achieved. And a lucky turn at a critical juncture made a difference.

South Carolina

"The key was sustained executive presence."

South Carolina's educational reform effort is widely regarded as one of the most cooperatively-developed programs in the nation. The governor, Richard Riley, is recognized as the major figure, but the active participation and support of the state superintendent and Department of Education, along with that of key legislators, proved essential. It was the policy coalition comprised of these figures that accounts for the program achievement. A tax increase for the reform program was necessary, and this also prompted the engagement of business sector.

The major vehicles during the early phases were two blue ribbon committees and a grass roots public campaign. The select committees employed extensive public relations processes, perhaps serving more in that capacity than as a study committee with a concentrated research agenda. Committee reports reflected this, consisting mainly of lists of recommendations. The process is described as similar to an election campaign. This also is reflected in the fact that the select committee phase was comparatively brief, requiring approximately four months from beginning to end.

As the program entered the legislative arena, the initiative shifted to key legislators, who continued to work with executive and educational representatives in the preparation of the Education Improvement Act — the omnibus legislative education package.

Because of its many visible points of entry, the South Carolina process is widely described as a "bottom-up" model. While the continued commitment of the governor and the select committees to a statewide consensus formation program is distinctive and certainly contributes to perceptions of wide involvement, as the program entered the legislative arena, the differences between South Carolina and other state programs become less pronounced. It is hard to see how it differs from other, "top-down" efforts. The program seems to have achieved a high level of public support, however, and this and the general sense of comfort the educational interests display toward most of its features portend well for the future.

South Carolina's comes closest of the subject states to the achievement of the "T Formation" described earlier.

South Carolina also has devoted a considerable amount of energy to an extensive implementation and oversight system, involving the continued presence of the original blue-ribbon committees, the larger presence of a select legislative oversight committee, a new oversight division in the Department of Education, and the Department's own program of implementation councils. The last of these, the implementation councils, are a more vital link between the state and the districts than may be popularly realized.

South Carolina's reform program seems to have its roots in programs established during the 1970s, especially basic skills testing.

"There's a reform movement we're experiencing, and it is different from before in that a lot of it is coming from within the state. It's not generated by any major court decision or federal legislation which calls for a uniform resolution of what is a national priority. In South Carolina, this is not the result of any Bell's Committee *[A Nation at Risk]* report, but a movement that was really kindled six or seven years ago with the Basic Skills Assessment Program initiated by the Legislature. This called for the state department to develop its objective and a test in the basic skills to test those objectives. Accountability was the force that motivated it." [Department of Education Official]

"One of the interesting things in backtracking through our files was that *A Nation at Risk* was sort of like the last document in getting ready. We have a National Governor's Association document dated 1980 that talks about education reform and getting ready to reform the schools." [Legislature]

"The establishment of the skills assessment program in the late 1970s signaled the start of reform and improvement and set in place the base for getting feedback on how well students were doing. It facilitated the whole reform movement we're in now; it was part of that evolution. And it also facilitated the implementation of all these major changes because we have a data base that we would not have had were it not for mandated testing." [Department of Education Staff]

"When the report cards came out [from the testing program], whether it was the state tests or the SAT [Scholastic Aptitude Test], South Carolina was never identified as a high achiever. We were always 46th, or 47th, or 48th. In this agency [the State Department of Education] consequently, we were spending a lot of our time explaining the reasons why we were last or next to last. We had never taken a strong stand that would call for major changes in the system of public education. So a year or so before the Bell report, we moved to develop a master plan for school improvement with the idea that we would look at the system and move from its specific orientation to a broad-brush approach. We did develop a plan, called 'The Move to Quality.' We had a great deal of support, and we were able to move in a reasonable time frame. The State Board of Education adopted the plan prior to *A Nation at Risk,* so we were a step ahead. But the national report came out just beautifully in terms of timing. I know of nothing that happened that could have better served our purpose than this. This truly brought out the need for some major changes in the state. The second thing that happened, the governor bought into the need for a major thrust in education in this state." [Department of Education Official]

"The year before the Education Improvement Act [EIA] was passed, the governor had attempted an educational program that was much smaller. I did not support it because I did not think it was comprehensive enough and did not feel it did what needed to be done [Note: the reference is to the 1983 session. See the following excerpt]. We needed a broad-based reform effort. The Legislature had done a lot during the 1970s, but the act I think that was just as important as the Educational Finance Act was the Basic Skills and Assessment Program, in which certain objectives were set out for each course and in each grade level. As a result of that we implemented a comprehensive system of testing. This program was really the reason I finally committed to support the present program. As I read about what was going on around the country, I got deeper and deeper into the test results of the basic skills. I began to track my own district. I could see a definite improvement. We only had three effective years of testing, but those test scores indicated progress." [Legislature]

Governor Riley, newly elected in 1982, soon placed education near the top of his policy agenda. A newly-elected state superintendent who was willing to actively seek education improvement proved a special bonus, and the stage was set for the formation of a powerful coalition. Some of the early initiatives were quickly quashed by the specter of new taxes, however, necessitating active efforts to enlist the involvement of the business sector.

"Right after Governor Riley was elected in 1982, and the state superintendent was elected, they somewhat independently of each other convened small ad hoc one-time task forces to look at the state of education. The governor's office looked at it in terms of all education, pre-school through graduate school, arts, educational television, technical schools. The Superintendent looked at it K-12. There seemed to be bubbling up some real interest in some major changes, particularly in K-12. This was all finished around January or February, 1983. At the same time, a budget crunch hit the state, and some legislators wanted an increase in the sales tax to help with the deficit and provide some local relief. Schools were not the major recipient but would have got some part of it. The Governor proposed tapping part of the increase, which would have been about $200 million, maybe $40 to $80 million for education, a similar amount for the state, part of which also would have gone to the schools. By the time this was proposed, it was pretty late in the session, about March, and it was rejected." [Governor's Staff]

"The governor introduced [during the 1983 session] a request for a penny sales tax increase. We had a few revival type meetings, but we kept it all in the professional community. Then the state newspaper that covers the midlands, and is one of the largest in South Carolina, appeared with a one page ad, 'Stop! No More Taxes!,' signed by the key business officials in the state, and let me tell you, within just a period of days it was no longer an issue in the General Assembly. We had some meetings where we asked, 'How do you bring those folks to your side?' That's when some effort was begun to do this." [Department of Education Official]

"The governor gave up on his original proposal when the Legislature defeated it. But he soon called in about eight or ten prominent business leaders and informed them of the budget situation and the needs in education. I guess, to the person, although there may have been one or two exceptions, they said, 'If you propose a one cent tax increase next year for a major educational reform proposal that has some teeth in it, and if the business communities can be involved in the process, not control it, but be involved in it, then they could very likely support an increase, but only if it goes to K-12'." [Governor's Staff]

Officially sponsored blue ribbon panels were the major vehicles for formulating the reform proposals in South Carolina, as in other states. The South Carolina approach, however, had certain unique features.

"Basically, it was in May 1983, that we started putting together some blue-ribbon committees. There actually were two. It happened that way by accident, but it really worked. The problem was that prominent business leaders are hard to get to meetings, and they hate to stay more than an hour or so. But they tend to have big-picture, long-term insights that you really need. This also was so with other prominent people, key legislators. So we created a two-tiered system, sort of independent committees. One was called a Business/Legislative Partnership Committee. This was the committee the Governor personally chaired, with the state superintendent as co-chair. The second committee was called the Committee for Financing Excellence in Education. It was composed of nuts-and-bolts people from education, business, and the Legislature, all of whom really knew their business. This committee did the initial drafts of all the proposals, and then we took them up with the Partnership Committee. The Partnership Committee was very good at staying out of specifics and giving general policy direction. It met probably six times during the Fall of '83. The meetings were always held at the Governor's Mansion. Attendance was generally 95 percent. Even the attendance in the Financing Excellence Committee, which with its subcommittees probably met 50 times, was exceedingly high." [Governor's Office]

The South Carolina committees did not seek so much to repudiate or invalidate the work of the state Education Department, as was sometimes the case in other states. Rather, the department's plan became an important part of the change process. Aside from the apparent high quality of the department's plan, two factors probably account for this: the active and positive involvement of the state superintendent, and the very limited time-frame within which the committees were operating.

"Fortunately for us, the governor also was vitally interested in moving education ahead, and he was looking for a vehicle. He came out with an executive order that really set the stage, and he used our 'Move to Quality' report as a basis for a discussion of the development of a program for the whole state." [Department of Education Official]

"The governor's two committees took 'The Move to Quality' report through that process — the coalitions, the advocates, there was some buying in, changes were made in that, anything that education could not agree with was deleted. So it was that they did a masterful job. The plan was there. All they had to do was react to the recommendations. This already was a product business and industry had bought into earlier, when it was developed. So we were starting from a very positive standpoint." [Department of Education Staff]

"We didn't come in with a preconceived plan. The State Superintendent had one, called 'A Move to Quality,' and eventually that became a vehicle." [Governor's Office]

"We knew we were going to need a tax increase of some sort, and that the reforms would have some teeth in them. So we knew we were in for an uphill battle. The committees were carefully chosen so you'd get all the key actors in the state, the education groups, various teachers' associations, superintendents, school boards, state board of education, top bankers in the state, insurance people, real estate people, textile people. So they were all involved. The governor really likes bottoms-up building of things. But we [the governor's office] had no time to come in and endorse. We literally took things in; they [the Financing Excellence Committee] literally wrote every word. The staff might have a recommendation, but it was written word for word by the committee." [Governor's Office]

South Carolina's committee processes were less the product of carefully preconceived models than evolving concepts. A great deal of the emphasis was placed on community forums presided over by prominent political figures. This emphasis on public participation, "grass-roots" involvement, appears to underlie the frequent use of the "bottom-up" appellation in that state.

"We got a lot of help from Mississippi, even though their reforms are much different than ours, but the process we used was similar." [Governor's Office]

"We modified what Mississippi did, but they really urged us to have local forums on education. We just did it in a bigger way. At that point, we didn't have a plan, so we held several forums around the state to get public input. We actually used this to refine the plan as we built political support. During the night [as part of the forums], the first 50 minutes to an hour were speeches by five people, not always the same individuals, although the same people rotated: the governor, the state superintendent, the lieutenant governor, a Teacher of the Year from that area, a business person from that area. They'd open up the session by laying out the problems of education, and then the remainder of the session was small group discussions. After these, at the end of the session, they would convene and we would try to get a consensus report from that region. The attendance at the forums was over 13,000." [Governor's Office]

"There's very little negative reaction here because we did not have a top-down proposal. The governor did not come in with a preconceived agenda.

The governor acted as the chief coordinator of a massive statewide needs assessment project based on local input. [Governor's Office]

"Well, we were involved from the very beginning, of course, with the way Governor Riley set up his [program]; he started from the grass roots and he had hearings all over the state. Of course we were fully, totally, involved in that, in the hearings, and we even had some of them right in the [either the school or the association office] building, and he built his fort from the ground up. And then, of course, when the various committees were formed, teachers had significant roles on those committees. So that's basically the foundation that I think is one of the reasons that we have not had as much problem as many other places — because we were involved at the very beginning of it." [Teachers' Union Official]

"The discussion group meetings were centered on the things the blue ribbon committees were considering. So the committees were operating in sync with this process. Also, each person attending a meeting was asked to leave his address and phone number, and his Assembly Member and Senator's name. Those were put into a computer for use during the legislative process." [Governor's Office]

"During the day of a forum meeting, each school district in the surrounding area was visited by a prominent state leader — the governor, lieutenant governor, state superintendent, adjutant general. The governor's wife was part of this; she was out there. These people might be on a TV talk show, radio talk show, chamber of commerce meeting, visit some schools." [Governor's Staff]

"The heavy activity went on for four months, from August through November. A lot of these activities were paid for through a foundation that was created by a couple of business people, and they raised $100,000. But most of the work was voluntary. In addition, a banker on the committee spent another $30,000 to get some independent studies done by ECS on some of the topics we were looking at. We had lots and lots of in-kind from this office and the Department of Education, and from just citizens. The hotline, for example, we had phone banks, once the Legislature got in session. We would call people and ask them to contact their legislator when we thought something was in trouble." [Governor's Staff]

"The committee report was not in a slick form with a nice cover because we were moving too fast, and there was no time for it. Also, the committee wanted to keep it pretty straightforward. So it came out in the form of tables, laying out what the goals were and what the estimated five-year cost was." [Governor's Office]

As the public part of the process ended, the focus shifted to the legislature. Although the presence of a fairly broad coalition and wide public support were crucial, the issue was far from settled at this point, as indicated by the following remarks.

"During the course of the testimony [on the Education Improvement Act] the legislators frequently consulted the [Blue-Ribbon] committee report because it was so succinct. It gave what the issue was, what the initiative was, and what the cost was. [Legislature]

"All the parties were involved. Had the governor written the legislation it would have been different. We had the full support of the governor's office and the governor had the full support of the state superintendent. The governor and the state superintendent generated an awful lot of support in the general assembly." [Department of Education Staff]

"At first, everybody said, 'There's no way,' because it was an election year for both the House and the Senate. But there was a high level of energy and a high level of late evenings, working to get the best language put together for each program, and having the appropriate reviews. I think it is significant to note that for the first time, employees of this agency [State Education Department] were allowed to sit in on the floor to be able to respond on an item-by-item basis as the floor debate occurred, which is a little bit of an unusual situation." [Department of Education Official]

During the legislative process, key legislative players and strategies proved to be the instrumental elements.

"When they introduced the bill, the speaker was against it. Every major committee chairman was against it. All the general leadership, the old leadership, in the House was against it. They ran a poll, and I think there were of 124 members, I think there were something like 24 or 25 that did not say they were against the penny sales tax increase." [Legislature]

"It was a tremendously comprehensive bill; these things were Greek to me, all these categories, and programs. So I decided that if I was going to support the bill, I'd better learn something about it. So when the bill came before the committee, I insisted on going through it item-by-item. Well, that was the only way I was going to get any education out, so we made them [the governor's staff, education department, and select committee members] come in and explain the bill item-by-item. And we debated it, and debated the funding for each of these items, and that went on for several weeks, and out of that came a fight between my crowd and the chairman of the committee and his crowd, the leadership, and it was a battle back and forth. Of course we called on the Governor's support, and all the educational establishments. We turned on the lobbying efforts." [Legislature]

"While we did not get in the Ways and Means Committee all we wanted — we did not get the penny [sales tax increase], they did not vote for the penny, not then — we got them, our worst foes, to vote for $150 million. We knew then if we were able to get that group to go that far, then when we got to the floor we might have a chance." [Legislature]

"The strategy had developed in the Ways and Means Committee that we were successful with, was to take the program, to take the bill, item-by-item, get them to vote on an item, so there were all kinds of forces to get people to vote for a single item, and so we built it as if you were stacking blocks to build a house. We'd take this particular program and we'd describe it, and we'd get them to vote for it, and then we'd move to the next program and all its crying need and appeal, and people who normally wouldn't vote for it, but how can you be against children?" [Legislature]

"When the bill hit the floor, we made a motion that it be debated item-by-item, as we had done in committee. It carried, which was a terrific mistake for the people on the other side. So we went through the whole thing again, just like in committee, except this time with a forum of 124 House members. We were much more prepared this time than we were before. We had several people from the Department of Education and the governor's office [who are named], we got permission to move them into the chamber where we would have ready access so they could help us answer any questions. That was a valuable tool, to have them right on the floor where you could get an answer and understand what we were talking about. [Legislature]

"The press did a great job in reporting the committee debates on the bill, and the whole Legislature was able to follow what was going on in theWays and Means Committee, and they were interested, and so was the public." [Legislature]

"You would see the school boards' people and school administrators and the people from the NEA affiliate sit down together to work out language the three of them could live with. It really was a sense of family." [Legislature]

"That in itself is pretty remarkable, that you get the Department of Education, the school board, the superintendents, I guess, and the teachers all for it." [Teacher's Union Official]

Finally, just as a coalition was necessary to achieve the bill's passage, it remains so in the implementation stage:

"The Legislature feels an ownership in this act. It modified the bill substantially from the form proposed by the select committees, put in strengthened assessment and evaluation procedures and tightened up the accountability. We insisted on incentive pay. The Legislature feels it has an interest in this piece of legislation. The business community, to a certain extent, they feel an interest in it, the teachers and principals were all going to be getting a big raise, and all of that, and the public, generally, feels an interest because it was demanding benefits on the other end, and the quid pro quo was the penny (sales tax increase). [Legislature]

South Carolina has probably paid more attention to program oversight than any other state, and continued reports to the public and the legislature are important parts of the package. Those subjects, however, are beyond the scope of the present section and are reviewed later. Attention now turns to Colorado, where the conditions took a different turn.

Colorado

"Steamboat Springs, believe it or not, is a pretty conservative district."

Colorado did not follow the pattern of other states in the enactment of an omnibus education reform package. A Department of Education planning effort in 1983, Operation Renaissance, coupled with general funding concerns diverted initial legislative efforts from this direction. A select commission appointed by the Governor issued a report in May, 1984, Campaign for Quality, *but it did not result in a concerted legislative reform effort because of late timing (in terms of the 1984 session) and political partisanship.*

A subsequent potential 1985 legislative response was aborted when districts, at the prompting of the state superintendent, returned funds from state appropriations for a review of the educational system by the state Department of Education. Authorization was contained in the "Educational Quality Act of 1985," and the specific department program was entitled the "2+2 Project," in reference to the commitment of $2 million "district dollars" for two years. The report is scheduled for completion in 1987.

The state superintendent (commissioner) in Colorado was the major figure in the course of the events covered in this report, and his conception of a reform program directed to clearly established areas of need and programs with proven effectiveness prevailed. The governor also was committed to education, but his ability to effect change was constrained by funding limitations and partisanship factors.

Whether Colorado enacts an omnibus education reform package along the lines of other states probably will not be known until the 2+2 Project has been completed. In this respect, Colorado may serve as a model for critics of programs in other states. At the same time, others believe the Department of Education and the commissioner have assumed a heavy responsibility and question whether they will be able to deliver. Whatever else, whether the result of persuasive rhetoric, funding constraints, a strong tradition of local control, or probably a combination of the three, Colorado sidestepped and avoided the reform Juggernaut of 1983. It remains an important state to watch.

In terms of the programs of the 1980s, Colorado is clearly a "low-change" state, but it also is one that entered the period with a fairly strong educational program in place.

"I think the problem is a perceived image kind of thing, perhaps more than reality. Colorado happens to be a high achievement state. It has attracted a lot of young, highly educated people, and the overall population has a high education attainment level. That creates a high expectation, and this leads to greater achievement. Score-wise, Colorado stood better than most other states. We are usually in the top five. Overall, we have a good thing going here." [Local District Official]

"In the 1960s we had a value system dominated by a younger population. The age cohort going through created a whole different set of things; as it moved through the schools and a new smaller cohort came in, you began to get a lot of changes in the schools. It was really the interaction that did it. The schools were already changing by the kinds of kids coming in. Kids were interested in achieving; it was okay again to be an achiever. [Local District Official]

"A conservative is a parent who's child turns 13. Parents were worried about their kids. Steamboat Springs, believe it or not, is a pretty conservative district. Parents who had been through what they had did not want it for their kids." [Local District Official]

"Gradual centralization was taking away the mental set toward individual action. Administrators were becoming less innovative. There was an infusion during the early '60s that was exciting, but something then changed, and administrators became readers of rules. The only way to reverse this was to work toward keeping things decentralized while holding people responsible." [Department of Education Official]

"In terms of where it began here in Colorado, if I had to put a date on it, . . . there were a lot of changes going on before the national report. The commissioner made a speech that everyone was jumping on the bandwagon to take credit, but the changes had already started. People were already looking at teacher preparation programs; people were already talking about these things. Even student outcomes were changing, even before the big reports hit." [Local District Official]

"These changes were happening both in the Department of Education and the districts, but whether the schools were the cause of it, the initiators, or whether they were being pulled along, that is another question. You have to understand my perception of how policy is made, for whatever it's worth. I think that public policy is determined by values that are held by the policy makers, and these are driven both by their perceptions of the values of their constituents and by the real values of their constituents. The real question is, 'What changes those values?' They are changing. This is done through a lot of interactions — among demographics, technology, and socio-economic issues. All of these are coming together in Colorado at the same time." [Local District Official]

Much of the background to the present interest in educational change can be related to the passage of the Colorado Accountability Act in 1971, putting in place a statewide system for public involvement which has expanded into one of the largest such programs in the country.

"The Colorado Accountability Act of 1971 required each district to have objectives, priorities for a two- to-five-year period, a plan for evaluating and reporting to constituents and to the state what the strengths and weaknesses are, and documenting them. This allowed the State Department to drop a lot of the district accreditation requirements, since if this process was working it would not be necessary to be out there counting a lot of books and doing that sort of thing." [Department of Education Official]

"The Accountability Act was passed in 1971. As a local school administrator, I was part of the resultant emphasis on process and management. Local boards would establish their own goals and directions, and if this varied, so much the better. It ensured flexibility in the system." [Department of Education Official]

"The reason public disclosure was important was that it was the final test. District constituents would exercise the self-correcting aspect. Local accountability committees were required to present their goals and objectives to the local board for adoption. At that time, the local boards were spending all their time on collective bargaining and planning for school construction, and no one was minding the quality of education in the district." [Department of Education Official]

"There was a lot of resentment that this local accountability committee conflicted with the local school board, and we spent a lot of time working the two out. The accountability committees provided about 2,000 people, along with 1,000 board members, to ensure wide citizen involvement in local school matters. Since the mid-1970s, about half of the elected board members have come from these committees. It's almost a prerequisite. These are people who think in terms of outcomes and curriculum." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"By the late 1970s, the push was on through the Effective School studies, and the result was a call for local advisory committees in every school, looking at the district charge and developing things specific to the school attendance areas. This involves about 6,000 people. . . . They got active in the program and sometimes came to a conclusion that a building was needed. We have an extremely high passage of millage, and I think much of this is attributable to these committees." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"I believe this program is not as strong a force in this state as the Department of Education people might believe it is, because I know many administrators who have no idea what it is. They recognize local accountability, but when they try it they do not follow the letter. Most of us are guilty of that to a very large degree. I have an advisory committee, but there are things I am not going to take to them. . . . It's like asking a lay person how you perform an appendectomy. When it comes to instruction strategies and the kinds of things you ought to be teaching, I think that is our responsibility. I believe the way it works best is that you are asking your community to be involved in some way, which wasn't done before, so that involvement itself gets their support." [Principal]

"We've had an Accountability Law for — I guess since 1971 — and it has been a law that has progressed over time. The law has remained the same, but the rules implementing it have changed from very low level process kinds of things in the districts to rules that clearly call for outcome measures to be reported to the state. There has been a significant progression that has taken place in this state, without any specific mandate." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"These things that have been taking place over the last several years have not made educational reform the issue here that it has been in other states. And that's not to say we don't have some areas that need improvement." [Department of Education Official]

As in other states, test score results, in this instance mainly SAT scores, induced concerns in Colorado. At the time of the release of the national reports, particularly A Nation at Risk, *the Governor empaneled a Task Force for Excellence in Education, and the State Board of Education launched Operation Renaissance. Colorado has a comparatively highly regarded state Education Department and commissioner. Thus, rather than being placed on the defensive, the department's materials and proposals were used to inform the preliminary efforts in all sectors.*

"There was decline across the country, and legislators painted everyone with the same brush. Our scores were down, although still higher than other states. This became a political question for legislators. It's a political question as much as a level of achievement question. There is a perception that education has been dominated by a more liberal element. The concern was with what was being taught more than achievement, but achievement test scores were something you could point to and demand change, even though the real issue was a more conservative approach in the schools, back to basics and more fundamentalism, a reaction to the progressive movement." [Local District Official]

"To point to a single thing, . . . it all kind of came together at the same time. This was true across the country. We did not avoid that in Colorado. There is a national network, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governor's Association, all have annual meetings and talk about the same issues." [Local District Official]

"The educational reform movement is healthy, because it focuses the issue. Being in education, you want to focus on your issue. You take the heat, but you also stir up interest in doing something. These become political decisions. They're not always rational. You come up with all kinds of judgments on what you should do, but the decisions are made differently; they are made politically. So you accept that, and you work with it. This is not a problem. I would hate not to have it be this way." [Local District Official]

"I thought *A Nation at Risk* was great. I though it stimulated the country to be concerned about education, which, in fact, I think it should. . . . It stimulated the whole country to take another look at education, and I think we are seeing some changes that are taking place either at the initiative of state departments, state boards, or legislatures that are very, very positive. And the only thing that concerns me a little bit is that . . . I hope the other states are establishing a pretty good data base, as we're trying to do here." [State Education Department Staff Member]

"State policy makers normally do not have a good research source for public policy. There's a lot of skimming, borrowing from other states. We don't know if these things will work. There was some of that here, but not a lot." [Legislature]

"Legislators were becoming much more sophisticated through their networks. They knew what other states were doing. The tendency was for them to start legislating more. Legislators began looking at everything, viewing it as their responsibility to fix it up." [Principal]

"Operation Renaissance was an opportunity for the Department to, in a proactive way, develop some activities and plans in response to *A Nation at Risk* and various other kinds of areas. Essentially, what that did was it brought together, through a series of task forces, groups of people to discuss areas of concern and some of the curriculum areas — mathematics, English, social science, foreign languages." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"Colorado did not really have a blue-ribbon committee. There was a governor's task force, but most of its ideas came out of the Department of Education. At the department was this thing called Operation Renaissance. This was not legislative. It was our reform effort. It began by looking at graduation requirements, length of school day, parental involvement. It had a whole lot of task forces that reported back to the Department. Out of this, there were task forces on subject areas. This became the focus of the present program." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"The Governor's Select Committee was a couple of years ago. Not much came from it. It ran into a political wall, since the legislature is controlled by Republicans. There were pieces, but only that. There was no legislative blue ribbon committee." [Local District Official]

"The greater impact was the State Department's Operation Renaissance, which brought together a series of task forces, groups of people, to discuss areas of concern and some of the curriculum areas. We were able to get that moving fairly rapidly, and the governor's task force almost became a secondary element to what we had already been involved in. So it became kind of a trick to work effectively with the governor's commission. Almost all of their report echoed information we had. We were always four or five months ahead of their power curve, so that was one reason that not a lot of emphasis was placed on it. The study commission's recommendations also came out just as the legislative session was ending, so the timing was bad. Ours were coming out as each group finished its work, so we didn't wait until the whole thing was finished. We could continue to feed information as it was needed. So I think timing was probably the greatest thing. Their intentions were good, but their timing was just terrible." [Department of Education Staff Member]

Colorado's constitutional controls on the usurpation of local control by the state were clearly a factor in limiting the focus of reform efforts, placing curricular matters, a major portion of most state programs intended to enhance student achievement, beyond the pale. There was an

effect, but it was indirect, and there is early evidence of retreat even from the local initiatives.

"Curricular standards were not part of Colorado's program, because this is really a local control state, with instruction vested constitutionally in the local boards." [Local District Official]

"We have legislators who have moved here from other states. They want to legislate what was done in their states. It isn't going to happen, because constitutionally it goes right back to the local board." [Principal]

"Operation Renaissance basically said that the major universities in the state of Colorado would not be accepting graduates from secondary schools unless those graduates met increased requirements — specifically, two years of foreign languages, an extra year of math, an extra year of science, and extra year of English. By extra, I mean going from an average of, say, three, to an average of four. We [in vocational education] were concerned, as were people associated with other electives, that this would have a negative effect on our program. We have some research that this in fact has been the case, and there are several ironies to it. One is that, to our knowledge, no [post]secondary institution in the state actually did require that there be two years of foreign language, for example, as an entrance requirement." [State Vocational Program Staff Member]

"The impact of Operation Renaissance I think was very beneficial, and very positive in the overall development and growth of the quality of our secondary programs. I feel very firmly that that's the case. However, I do think it had a negative impact on the vocational education programs, simply from a matter of there's an opportunity cost in the amount of time that you have available, and obviously if you restrict that amount of time then you have a problem with the opportunity cost. We have a research paper that we commissioned that indicated that this was the case [Anderson, B. Harold and Brouilette, Mary DeMaio, "The Effects of Increased Academic Requirements for Graduation on Secondary Vocational Enrollments in Colorado," Department of Vocational Education, Colorado State University, February, 1985]. [State Vocational Education Staff Member]

"This is a local control state, with instruction constitutionally vested with local boards. There is a lot of push for that, and a lot of districts have already changed. Denver changed two years ago and backed off this year. The University of Colorado has imposed some new entrance requirements which affect the districts." [Local District Administrator]

"In my district we implemented higher graduation requirements, and there was an effect on voc-ed, but there also was on art, music, and other electives. Our goals now include efforts to improve participation in those programs. I have not seen an effect on the drop-out rate. Our foreign language enrollments have gone up, as a result of increased higher ed requirements, and this has detracted from other electives." [Principal]

Money for education improvement may have been more of an issue in Colorado than other states. The costs of reform influenced legislative resistance to massive change as well as receptivity toward less-costly alternatives.

"The session started, and there were 10 or 12 bills mandating this or that. They had three bills on testing, a couple of bills on student drop-outs, and one or two on gifted and talented. They had a couple on teacher education and changing the administrator preparation program. This was a real conflict, with the state taking over part of what had been delegated to the local level. Earlier, before the session, the commissioner had proposed that $2 million be set aside by the legislature for the department to go back and identify the problems and hold the districts responsible for creating a solution. That did not get very far." [Department of Education Official]

"There was never any money for reform. When the initial economic decline hit in 1981, it really affected this state. There were a whole lot of measures for returning taxes to the people. The Legislature reduced the tax base. The Legislature would not increase taxes, and the state economy was not in that great of shape. When things began to change around, in 1984, the tax base was no longer there." [Legislature]

The State Superintendent's proposal for an analysis intended to provide an objective assessment of the condition of education in Colorado, prior to any further legislative action, prevailed when it was coupled with a unique suggestion for funding it.

"When the session started, the PTA and others felt that the [state superintendent's] proposal was better than the dozen or so bills the legislature was considering. The [superintendent] then approached the districts, asking them to give back [from their state appropriations] $2 million the first year, and $2 million the second to the state to address the problems that were in those bills. The districts agreed to give back $3.70 per student for the next two-year period." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"This was the '2 + 2 Project.' We gave them [the legislature] a big check, and in return they killed all of those bills in committee. So now we're back to a major effort to collect information as descriptive as possible on the quality of the K-12 system. We've never done this before. We are testing kids in grades three, six, nine, and 11, but that's the traditional type of thing. The second year we will be looking at the different ways you would judge a system other than just the usual math/science type of requirements. We're going to be judging the kids at different grade levels in terms of critical thinking, problem-solving, personal well-being, knowledge of the fine arts, everything we've been involved in, as a kind of snapshot in '86." [Department of Education Official]

"We feel this is a better assessment of the system than in other states. We're collecting information on the quality of teachers applying for certification, their knowledge of subject matter, and so on. We're observing them in their student teaching. We're testing all of the administrators applying for administrator credentials. From May to August [1986] we'll have a number of seminars with higher ed people, community people, and we will give them the data and ask them what are the implications. All of this, the efforts of the last 10 or 15 years, is to make those local leaders responsible for the operation of the system. And I still think this is a better way to go than a more centralized approach." [State Board Staff Member]

"We'll see if this is going to work, because others are saying California is way ahead; look at Texas! South Carolina has a whole comprehensive package. We don't know if it's going to work, but we want it to, because of the involvement and sense of ownership among the people who have been out there for awhile." [Department of Education Official]

"We have been operating under mandates for so long, people have difficulty responding to the department's offer for involvement. They've had trouble becoming creative. Now that we're into it, we're finding all kinds of things. There is a research element running through here. The commissioner pulled together a half dozen or so hand-picked people, and created a sort of little skunkworks to work on this [2 + 2] program. It's really great to show what can be done without the Legislature. We picked up some money from foundations because we have a plan for working on the drop-out issue." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"The passage of the law [the 2 + 2 Program], which is essentially a two-year law to assess the quality of education in the state, provides an opportunity now for us to demonstrate in different ways what's been taking place, without being restricted to a testing program or something like that.

We really feel very strongly that at the end of the two-year period of time that we will be able to provide some information to the legislators that's in a form they will understand, and it will provide some recommendations that they will be able to live with and we can concur with as well. With the Educational Quality Act, we bought some time. We bought a couple of years' time with the Legislature to demonstrate what it is we're doing. Whether we will be able to answer all of their questions, I'm not really sure, because the agendas continue to change. We'll know better next year, in 1987 when we have to report back." [Department of Education Official]

"I believe that in five or six years from now, somebody else will write another book, and it may be called *A Nation at Risk: Part Two,* and I'd like to be able to respond to those kinds of issues that will be brought up, saying, 'Look, when the first volume came out, this is where we were, and as a result of those things we've done, this is where we are now. And that's clearly the result of these other kinds of things.' And I'm not sure that other states are doing that. I think at the national level, some of the quality indicator projects have been trying to encourage all of us to do that, but whether other states are being responsive or not, I really don't know." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"It's a very exciting time. I think the potential is enormous. We just have to take advantage of the opportunity and become more proactive. There are a lot of things we can do, if we just try them, just keep pushing." [Board of Education Staff Member]

So, in Colorado, the returns are not yet in. As with Colorado, the State Superintendent in Illinois, the next state considered in this review, played a critical role, but one that led to a somewhat different program.

Illinois

"Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain."

Illinois is characterized as a high change state by virtue of the enactment of comprehensive education reform and funding programs in 1985. It also is listed among those in the 'top-down' category. Yet, the state is extraordinary for a couple of reasons. The first is the decisive influence exercised by the state superintendent and the Department of Education, which was manifest in the 1983 establishment of a state-level study committee. Throughout the process, this influence was treated with official modesty and expressed in deference to more politically prominent figures, essentially the governor and key legislative leaders.

Several select committees were active in Illinois, but the one that was legislatively established carried the greatest weight. It was this committee's recommendations that led to the omnibus reform legislation, representing a program that seems to have accommodated many of the major educational interests and which helped the state education department to achieve about 90 percent of its objectives.

To categorize the movement as top-down, therefore, is to obfuscate the very important roles performed by the state school chief, the State Board of Education, and the Department of Education, as well as the active involvement of representatives of most major educational sectors, including the leading teachers' association. The Illinois experience vividly exemplifies the enormous capacity to influence the direction of educational change available to the formal state educational establishment.

The impetus in Illinois was not so much the early test score results as an executive effort to clarify the respective responsibilities of the state and the districts, particularly the statutory mandates.

"It was probably around 1980 that the governor, being a prominent Republican, asked the State Board of Education to consider taking a lot of the major education granting programs and consider block-granting them. This was consistent with what the Reagan Administration was doing with a number of federal programs, but it was right in the middle of the budget development process that year, and the [State] Board [of Education] said it would like to respond to it over a longer period of time. The board also felt that a number of those programs were tied to sections of the School Code, that there was such a direct link between requirements placed on districts that it was not confident it could look at them in isolation." [Department of Education Official]

"About the same time [c. 1980], the governor created a Mandates Commission for all of government. It bogged down. It could not get to the in-depth analysis. There was a shallow report." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"The [State] Board's response [to the governor] led to a request that it be allowed instead to look at the requirements the state placed on the districts and how consistent they were with the original purposes for putting them there." [Department of Education Official]

"For a century or more, the statutes contained a section where the Legislature [tautologically] expressed its intent that children be taught those things for which teachers were prepared to teach. They were for the most part silent on anything beyond that. During the ensuing years, a lot of special interest stuff, calling for courses in this and that, was introduced. But nowhere did the state express its sense of what the primary purposes of the schools should be." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"The State Board of Education is relatively new, 10 years old. Then [early 1980s] it was searching for a mission. After four or five years of being directed, pushed, and reactive, it chose to become proactive and say, 'Let's start from ground zero and look at what we're doing. This led to the review of the statutory mandates." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"The State Board began its review of the statutory mandates, which led to a study that lasted more than two years. There were about eight or nine reports on different topics that came out of it. They ran from something as simple as the student records requirements to as complex as the instructional programs mandates. Almost without exception, flaws were found in the way the state was doing things. The most searing indictment was in the instructional programs area, where it became apparent that the mandates were absolutely mindless." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"We collected a lot of historical and in-depth information on what is required and how it came to be there, and none of it made any sense. State laws did not identify the purposes of schooling or the core subjects, except for American history. As a consequence of noting that our laws did not address what is important, and that there were only inferences [sic] about what should be required, we concluded the whole approach was wrong:

what we should be concerned about at the state level was results — we ought not to put restrictions on schools." [State Board Staff Member]

The Department's mandate studies provide something of a micro case study of what can happen when important educational interests are aroused. Finding that many of the state-required offerings in the educational programs area bore little relationship to student needs, the reports nonetheless stirred up a hornet's nest of responses from individuals and associations, some of which displayed considerably more concern over jobs than educational verities.

"These reports were coming out regularly over a two-year period, and the State Board of Education was in a constant series of hearings. The Board was very prominent during this period, and it came down strongly and courageously on a number of them, and as a result it had a public agenda." [Department of Education Official]

"Take physical education — we have more teachers in this field than any other general category because of the statutory requirement that it [physical education] be offered to students each term. Also, driver education — if you are going to spend millions of dollars reducing traffic accidents, the last place you should spend them is in driver's ed. In fact, there is some evidence that people without driver's education have fewer accidents. Here is a very expensive program competing with more academically relevant subjects during the school day. If you want driver education, don't dignify it as education. It should be offered on weekends. It should not be paid for with school funds, and it should not happen only in the schools. Hearing this, the driver's ed teachers went crazy. In all of these the Illinois Education Association was very critical, because jobs were at stake." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"While the whole process was going on, there was quite a mixed reaction, from the School Board Association, which was in favor, to the teacher unions and consumer advocacy groups, which were having fits. They [the latter] pulled out all of the political stops: consumer education, driver education, physical education, health people, everybody who thought it concerned them would fight over it." [State Board Staff]

At this juncture the Department found it necessary to move to a more expedient strategy, as its program faltered and it found it necessary to work to nullify bills based on its recommendations. The advent of A

Nation at Risk *proved propitious, and the stage was set for a more comprehensive approach to educational change.*

"By this time the [1983] session was underway. And while a lot of legislators had expressed support for the work the Board had done, we received word very early that not much was going to happen with it. However, one senator [named in the interview] was enamored of a couple of Board recommendations, on driver ed and physical ed, and he plucked those out of the reports and introduced a couple of bills. At the same time, we were advised that these things would not get out of committee. This would have been a disaster for the Board, if the first two things to see the light of day out of all this work were to go down in ignominious defeat, it would cast a pall on the whole thing. We needed a success, not a fall." [Department of Education Official]

"Our people talked to the legislative leadership privately, and asked them if they would consider having a joint study commission, between the House and the Senate, that they would appoint, and have the committee chairs shift those bills and any other bills on education reform to this joint committee. The national reports were surfacing then, and that type of thing, and they agreed." [Department of Education Staff Member]

"It probably was such a fortuitous thing to have this national thing occur just at the point we were ready. We were probably more ready than anyone. I just shudder to think what would have happened if we had not had that national report. The national movement more than anything, really, presented us with the public relations vehicle for getting something done. We did not have a high level of interest in what we were doing before then." [Department of Education Official]

"In April, 1983, *A Nation at Risk* came out, and that caught the imagination of a lot of people, legislators, a lot of people. Their response was to adopt graduation requirements, the typical legislative response in other states, but which was moving away from the direction the department wanted to go." [Department of Education Staff]

"I talked to one of the legislative leaders and asked him if he would consider introducing a piece of legislation creating a commission. He said, 'What kind of a commission do you want?' I didn't know, so I asked for time to go back and talk it over with the boss. He agreed we should do that, so I wrote a bill creating a Commission on the Improvement of Elementary and Secondary Education and deliberately left the State Board of Education off of it. We didn't want any Board members. The governor would appoint some of the commission members; and the leaders of each house would do likewise. The chairmen of the education committees would be co-chairs." [Department of Education Official]

"The Governor had not been viewed as a friend of education or out front on this issue. He latched on to it as a theme. He needed something, and he got on this wagon. But his presence was very important." [University Professor]

"The governor, everybody, took it very seriously. The thing [the commission legislation] just flew through, and everyone appointed good members. The governor appointed the head of the National Education Association affiliate, which is the most powerful political body in education in the state. According to the bill, the State Board of Education would provide the staff." [Department of Education Staff]

"One legislator knew who [i.e., the Department of Education] had written this thing. He let the Department people know it would be the kiss of death if it ever was felt this was a put-up job." [Legislature]

"We heard that one legislator was concerned that the commission was a put-up job. One of our people met with him and said, 'Everybody that has been looking at education needs a forum for expressing what is believed to be needed. You also ought to listen to what the Board has to say, just as you listen to everybody else.' He said, 'Fine, but let's keep our distance.' We did. Aside from the first meeting, when the Superintendent wished them well, we never went near it. We worked with the staff, of course, on the committee papers and staffing it, but we never went near it." [Department of Education Official]

The select commission's approach did not center on the generation of new research findings; rather, it looked to the educators within the state, particularly the State Board and Department of Education, for policy guidance.

"The State Board had a certain amount of influence [with the Study Commission] since it was their people who defined the alternatives. But we really tried to be as honest as possible in discerning what the alternatives were. There were very narrow ranges of alternatives in these things. I don't know if we weren't very creative or what the story was, but generally speaking, across the nation the range of alternatives examined for improving education was surprisingly narrow. There were some things that were just too wacky for us to consider, and they might have been the ones we should have looked at." [Department of Education Staff]

"From their [the study committee members'] perspective, imagine what a relief it was to know that the three years of research [on the mandate studies] were already done. As long as the Department was careful not to seek credit or to make sure things were not attributed to it, the study commission could examine conclusions without fear of anyone challenging their assumptions. It was the very limiting of the focus that made the commission effective. People could point to a few things, a few problems, a few solutions, nothing amorphous; it was handle-able. Strangely enough, the commission's perspective was broader than it would have been had the Board not done its stuff." [Department of Education Staff]

"Ninety percent of the study commission report came from the mandates studies and the work the State Board did. And those people [select commission members] know that too. They knew they had to depend on that source. They became devil's advocates on almost everything, but after a while they could not find flaws in it." [State Board Staff]

"The [select] commission process was more of a political process. There was no attempt to document why reform was needed in any way. But momentum built, and others got into the act; splinter groups, ad hoc associations, and education community groups tried to shape what would happen. There were a lot of actors, and as it continued, people became less and less concerned with what was the evidence. All were on the bandwagon. The politics of the whole thing is essential to understanding it. Politics is everything in this state. As it became a horse the Governor wanted to ride, it took on steam [sic]. It looked for awhile as if nothing would happen, because so many got into the act. Educators can't agree on anything, and they were picking away. The Governor played an uncharacteristic role, because this was essential to him. He began a process of consensus building, and he did a skillful job. Consequently, the package did reflect the study commission's feelings, but it was not just what it wanted but a lot of other people's input as well. The process was consultative, consensus, and very heavily political. But it did not address the fundamental kinds of issues facing education in this state. It is an accountability document." [University Professor]

While the state education establishment was instrumental throughout the process, it sometimes found itself in opposition to committee preferences.

"There were a number of wrinkles we were not too happy with, and later, during the legislative in-fighting, we got some of it changed, some of the select commission's stuff changed. For example, they had a thing about testing at several grades. We weren't opposed to the concept, but we were opposed to the way they came up with it, and we wanted to link it to some other stuff. Our point was simply this: testing, in itself, may be an interesting exercise in accountability, but if your motivation is instructional improvement, there must be some other things. You must link testing to some other kind of accountability. There must be some kind of reasonable action as a consequence of the test results." [Department of Education Staff]

"I don't know if it can be traced back to a single source. There were people on the leadership staff and people here [Department of Education]. I know the State Board of Education made it very clear they weren't concerned with who got the credit as long as the report made it into law. We did all of the study commission's staffing stuff, and there were occasions when there were half a dozen or more staff sitting in front of the commission going through full interrogation shooting questions back and forth on the validity of our work and back-up data. At the study commission's request, the Department also did a critique of preliminary proposals, and there were several on which it was strongly opposed. I think in all cases where we were strongly opposed there was good conciliation reached." [Department of Education Staff]

"When the report came out, a good 90 percent was Board policy already. The background and recommendations somehow found their way into the study commission's report, and the legislators accepted it as their own." [State Board Staff]

"We did not have the State Board sniping at the commission, although it had grounds to do so; the report was a political document, that never really identified the problem. If the Board had been opposed they could have blasted those guys out of the water." [University Professor]

"Even without the Board it still would have been possible to have a commission, and a product, because the political magic was there. We had a governor who wants to run for a fourth term, facing the same opponent who attacked him in the past for weakness on educational issues. He needed something in education. So you had pressure on this governor to act in education, and he early-on said he backed the commission report. Since you had Republican and Democrat spokesmen in the House and Senate [on the commission] everything jelled. A lot of this was luck. The Board to this day has sought no credit." [Department of Education Staff]

"Confusion might have reigned here if it had not been for the commission. The School Problems Committee, the ex-State Superintendent who had his own study committee, splinter groups within the legislature, we almost had too many groups. The commission was a stroke of brilliance. It was the legislative committee, and it became the neck of the pump. It was a very effective vehicle for change." [Department of Education Staff]

At this point the arena moved from the select committee processes to the legislature. The fact that the commission was a quasi-legislative organization, chaired by legislative leader, imbued it with a sort of intrinsic legitimacy and afforded its recommendations with a preemptive quality over those of other organizations.

"The commission bills and everything were put in. The Governor publicly supported commission positions, with a few other things he wanted, most of which were more or less granting programs which had nothing to do with the commission's report, sort of as [President] Reagan's position on the voucher plan had nothing to do with the Bell Committee's report, but he felt he could support it." [Department of Education Staff]

"The key to the commission's success in the legislative process was the presence of legislative members on the commission and a resultant inside key lobby, along with the commitment of a whole lot of people on the floor who respected them. There also were some things to trade off. The whole political process was to work in favor of the commission. Everybody else was a pretender — all other commissions and committees." [Legislature]

"The omnibus bill succeeded because it represented a balance between state mandate and local decision-making and implementation. We didn't put a lot of stuff in statute, like prohibiting the use of the public announcement system during classroom hours as they did in Texas. We're a pretty conservative state; we're not on the cutting edge of change, and we don't make the same mistakes as others. We don't get into court over student assessment as in Florida. The evaluation is reasonable. We didn't have a career ladder." [Legislature]

"The commission accepted the fact that local districts should set goals and objectives, that they should have assessment systems to find out how well they are meeting their goals, but the commission never accepted the view that the State Board should set general outcome goals for schools, and districts should develop their objectives in terms of those goals. This stuff found its way into the omnibus bill during the waning days. We [the State Board and Department of Education] ended up, therefore, with about 99 percent of what we recommended." [State Board Staff]

"The omnibus bill has few major programs. A lot [of its provisions] are pilot programs or more of the same. One thing that was done that was more important than all the other stuff is the money given to education. It got the largest increase it has ever had in this state. This next year they will get a little more on top of this. Most goes for salaries, and that may do more good than all of the other legislation." [Legislature]

"Generally speaking, school administrators have recognized these as needed changes, and there has been no complaint out of the administrators, even on the requirement for re-certification each five years. The one that has caused the most problem has to do with school district reorganization. I don't think we'll ever get it. Other than that one, the school reform program has been pretty well accepted by all facets. And we even have things in there allowing students to opt out of mandatory physical education, and the mandatory evaluation of teachers, which drive the unions up a tree." [School Superintendent]

"We gave education a big shot, but there will have to be a continuation of increased funding to keep these programs going. One of our big concerns right now is just that." [Legislature]

"If we can keep the interest going for the next three years we will have accomplished a lot. Legislators' attention spans must be measured in microseconds. Even their obsessions only keep them interested for a short time. Most, however, have accepted the fact that there can be no quick-fix. So they may be willing to sit still for a little while. It might work. In Illinois, everything is done by consensus — both parties have to agree, and we have consensus on this." [Legislature]

"What happened was relatively good. We took our time — the members of the education family, the school administrators, the school board association, PTA, federation of teachers. These people have different points of view. I suggested early-on that we put aside our differences and work toward a common goal, to go to the legislature with one accord. That was a significant event! The commission [process] was long, tedious, many members wanted meaningful reform, and so did I. We hammered out a lot and came up with a package, about 88 percent of which was enacted." [Teachers' Union Official]

"Not much is going to change. It's status quo. The political process did not take the initiative away from the educational establishment. They joined hands. This made a lot of difference in the size of the policy leap." [Legislature]

"The process was a consultative, consensus effort, and very heavily political, and in many ways its result was clearly not bad in comparison with what the past track record had been. But it did not address the really fundamental kinds of issues facing education in this state." [University Professor]

"It really is phenomenal. In this state, 78 percent of the people of this state have no kids in the public schools. And most of those that do indicate contentment with their schools. This is not the stuff from which reform comes — we have a tax-paying public with no direct connection with education, no contact with teachers, anything: so, both contentment and no kids in school. When you take these two things, more legislation, quantitatively, was passed in one session than probably in the last 10 years. This makes an interesting setup." [University Professor]

"One of the wonderful things that happened in Illinois is that everyone thinks they are the mother and the father. The commission does, the legislature, the board, the governor, so everyone is running around patting himself on the back. It really was an unbelievable coalition, given that education in Illinois is as fragmented as it is in many states. My personal view, one shared by many others, is that the state superintendent came in and made it happen. He is a remarkable man." [State Board]

"We'd like to say that somehow all of this was planned, but it really was not." [Department of Education Official]

In all of the states considered so far, the state superintendent, and, to a more varied extent, the department of education, played key roles in the reform movements. In Florida, the next state considered, the pattern was a little different, as certain legislators and the governor assumed hegemonic roles.

Florida

"It was one big contest among the southern governors and between the two houses of the Legislature."

Florida is one of the early testing states. Information on the quality of its educational system from test programs instituted during the decade of the '70s was a major contributor to the calls for reform. Economic stresses during this period also called attention to the desirability of diversifying the economic base and improving the educational system.

Perhaps the key figure in placing education on the public agenda was Gov. Robert Graham, a former legislator with a long-time interest in public education. It was he who was responsible for the establishment of the Commission on Secondary Education to study and publicize the problem. Significantly, key leaders of both legislative houses were on the Commission. A report and recommendations, "Governor's Commission on Secondary Schools 1982 Study," were presented in late 1982 and were made priority legislative agenda items by the legislative members of the committee.

Florida's education reform program is extraordinarily spiced with acronyms. The governor's commission report led to the legislative enactment of the RAISE Program ("Raising Achievement in Secondary Education") legislation [SB 6-B (the RAISE Bill itself), 38-B ("Education Reform Act of 1983), 83-325 ("Master Plan for Postsecondary Education") 2-C (Amendments to the first two enactments), and SB 1-B & 1-C (General and Supplemental Appropriations Acts)] during the 1983 session.

The legislature was unable to complete action on the merit pay portion of the program by the end of the 1983 session, so it created an interim study commission, the Florida Quality Instruction Incentives Council, or the "QIIC (pronounced 'quick') Commission." The work of the organization was subsequently reflected in the "Omnibus Education Act of 1984," which consisted of the Merit Pay and Merit Schools Programs, along with the PRIME ("Progress in Middle School Education Program") Teachers as Advisors Program, and a few additional changes.

Unlike most of the other states considered in this report, the State Department of Education and state school chief were not active forces *behind the omnibus legislation in Florida, either for or against the statutory reform measures. The department, however, has embarked on its own, "bottom-up" reform program based on the Effective Schools concepts and administrator improvement programs, but this is in addition to the recent statutory changes. The "horizontal" or policy coalition in that state, therefore, consisted mainly of representatives of the executive and legislative branches,* sans *the pronounced participation of people in the Department of Education. This situation is further reflected in views that the vertical coalition in the reform effort was either nonexistent or very weak, and the effort is widely criticized by educators in that state as top-down. Most observers attribute the start of Florida's education reform efforts to the 1982 decision of the governor to create an education study commission, but most also note that this was mainly in response to widespread discontent with the quality of high school education in the state.*

"It's difficult to tell how the impetus for education reform came about. I think this also applies to the educational reform movement that seems to have swept the country over the past five or six years. Prior to the publication of *A Nation at Risk,* it seems that educational reform was a dead topic. I have a friend who teaches at Florida State University who told me that books with the title of educational reform, or educational innovation, anything that suggested fairly massive or ambitious educational change, were not then [late 1970s and early 1980s] being published. Publishers weren't interested in them because the markets for that kind of thing were saturated. And then, all of a sudden, there's this enormous increase in interest in educational reform, and I really don't know where it comes from. And I'm not sure that the claims made as to the need for reform are legitimate." [Department of Education Staff]

"One of the most frequently observed deficiencies in Florida is that SAT scores haven't been very high when compared with the rest of the country, where, as you know, they also had dropped. That decline is now starting to turn upward [sic], and so the inference made from this decline of SAT scores was that schools were diminishing in the effectiveness with which they provided academic education. I don't subscribe to that — the notion that our schools have declined in the effectiveness with which they impart academic knowledge, skills, or vocational skills. I think that's a misreading of what is happening. It is a politically useful misreading. It is not uncommon, and certainly not at the present time, for politically ambitious people to espouse education as their cause, and in the process of doing so, exaggerate the deficiencies of the educational system and see deficiencies in school effectiveness where they don't exist." [Department of Education Staff]

"One of the implications of Art Wise's argument [Note: *Legislated Learning, op. cit.*] (it's not even an implication — it is something very explicit) is that there are political problems, basically political problems such as desegregation in schools, which are obvious and can be addressed through political means. But then there are technical problems with regard to how people learn, the social conditions of learning, the psychological conditions of learning, the organizational conditions of learning, about which we know very little. For these things, the political solution is not appropriate." [Department of Education Staff]

The results of testing programs, as in other states, clearly stimulated much of the subsequent interest in reform in Florida. A legislature with a tradition of assertiveness in public education also proved to be an important factor.

"We also have a strong legislature in Florida. The state has, as I understand it, one of the largest permanent staff organizations in the country in terms of having a permanent staff attached to a committee system, and it has just been strong! Often times the [Department of Education] has been more reactive than proactive because of that." [Citizen]

"Philosophically, politically, here is a state with a lot of its legislative leadership coming from around the country. It's less provincial than many states in the sense that if you look in the classrooms and administrative offices you would find that 80 to 90 percent of these people grew up in some other state. So they don't have a vested interest in keeping things stable. Our legislature, having been very active, and a lot of our legislative people having grown up in other states too, bring a lot of national experience with them. And they are quick to intervene and want to change educational structure and policy, and the trend is if anybody is doing it somewhere in the country, it will be introduced in our legislature next session." [University Professor]

"The reforms of the '80s in Florida represented a dissatisfaction with some of the local decision-making, and, indeed, it was a national phenomenon, and you had a substantial change in actors. Most of the reforms in Florida came after reapportionment, with this whole new wave of legislators coming in, most of whom were young, and bright, and experiencing their first term in politics. Bob Graham, the present governor, was a member of that freshman class. Several became speaker of the House, or whatever. Graham, in fact, was chairman of the Senate Education Committee during the 1970s when all the finance reforms were enacted. If a legislator doesn't legislate, what's he going to run on for re-election, and education is so important in Florida; it accounts for most of the budget. And test scores were inadequate, as they were nationally." [Citizen]

"The recession in the mid-'70s made a lot of people do some serious thinking in this state, because up to that point the state's economy was largely tourism, agriculture, and construction, a three-legged stool. Cut off any one of the legs and it falls over. The recession caused people to start thinking that we needed to broaden the economic base of the state, there needs to be manufacturing, interest in high tech. And as various task forces were pulled together through the governor's office, the Legislature, the higher education Board of Regents, the feeling was, as folks were interviewed from IBM and Motorola, and Pratt-Whitney, and General Electric, Westinghouse, you name all the big companies, the Fortune 500 types, their answers were, 'You need to strengthen your K-12 and your higher education system in order to be competitive. We look at you as a big market in Florida, and a lot of people would like to live here. But they are not sure they want to bring their children here to be educated in the public schools of Florida.' These surveys created the incentive for the Governor's office, and the Legislature in particular, to want great momentum, which has as its ultimate goal economic development for the state. I'd like to believe there was some intrinsic, altruistic belief that it was time to improve the public schools. I don't think that is true. It was motivation for economic development and the feeling we would have to become more competitive for that." [Higher Education Administrator]

"A study had been done in California between 1970 and 1980, that we replicated here in the late seventies. There was a time when Florida's standards for high school graduation were established at the state level, and there were certain minimum requirements for graduation. That process eroded, and in the name of home rule and local control, each of the 67 county school districts set up its own graduation requirements. This caused a big drop in the core academic experience of kids coming out of high school. There was a proliferation of curricula at the secondary level. In 1981, there were only seven percent of the high school graduates in the state of Florida who met a typical college-prep program of the 1940s and

'50s [described as,'four units of English, three of history, three of math, three of social science, two or three of foreign languages']. Seven percent!" [Department of Education Staff]

"Everything didn't always end up the way we originally hoped it might, at least in timing things. One of the first major policy changes this department was trying to bring about was a policy of decentralization, in which we tried to remove a lot of the constraints from the statutes and the rules that had accumulated over the past 25 years, and which were creating an environment in which creativity was not supported. It was easier for people to comply with a great amount of detailed requirements than it was to take issue and to be creative and have flexibility. We did move forward on that, but collective bargaining come into play very quickly after that. So we ended up with districts with no experience in collective bargaining agreeing to non-monetary conditions without very much thought. So, to a great extent, we never succeeded with the decentralization we sought. We changed the laws and the regulations, this was in the early 1970s, but we didn't change the capacity of the people. So this flexibility was immediately forfeited through the master contract." [Department of Education Official]

The governor's role as the initiator of the reform movement is widely acknowledged and receives frequent reference.

"I don't think Florida is dissimilar from the other major reform states. The reform emanated from the top-down in Florida, for sure. It did not start in the '80s, though. It started in the '70s, although we like to say it was 1983 because of the 'RAISE' Bill, which was truly a result of the Governor's Commission on Secondary Education. I think a lot of people credit the RAISE Bill, but competency testing, I would say, is really the beginning of the reform movement. With this we began not only to get information on the system, but information that was troubling. Districts could do what they wanted, as there were no mandatory requirements, and no one knew what students were taking. You know, education is a state responsibility. Somewhere along the line, despite local control, the state has to assume its constitutional responsibility." [Governor's Staff]

"Probably the most significant event in Florida's reform movement was the election of Bob Graham as governor and his tremendous dedication to quality education. There were some early starts related to this, and certainly there is another cast of players, but I think that had the Governor not been so supportive of change and excellence, I doubt that it would have been as successful as it has." [Higher Education Administrator]

"The governor's whole career has been based on education — he is called 'The Education Governor.' He wanted to be the first in the nation to come out with something related to merit pay. People in the state joked about contests between Tennessee and Florida as to who would come out first with a merit pay plan. You have a very active governor involved in the whole process, as well, so everybody was in education. It was a big issue. All of this was before *A Nation at Risk*." [Legislature]

"Our big start came as we tried to equalize school funding. It was one of the hue and cries. As we looked at equalization, I think it became apparent that just equalization alone was not going to bring about quality education, and that there probably was a need to enhance the funding level that became more important as equalization took place. But there also was a realization that you're not going to get much enhancement money by playing the same tune; there had to be tangible evidence of quality improvements taking place at all levels of education." [Legislature]

"The early things that took place might have been the most significant of all. They were to set up a system of accountability that provided us with a knowledge of what was happening and the results. A good part of that was an assessment testing program by the state in the K-12 area, and that went hand in glove with the Demonstration of Basic Literacy Program — there had to be some demonstration of competency." [Legislature]

"It's amazing to me, over a period of time, how people will pick up someone else's idea, and in a few months you will be able to persuade them that it was their own, and they will move with it. In Florida, we've done a lot of that. But all of our stuff has really come from ad hoc ideas. A lot of it has come from one committee in the House competing with a Senate committee, and in some respects we got too much reform. We are an activist operation. I think we would do just as well if we didn't have so much of it. It also is true that the governor has great capacity to effect a form of leadership, because as governor, whatever he focuses on will draw a lot of attention. There has been criticism here in Florida, saying that the governor has taken too much of the leadership away from the State Board. This really doesn't matter, where it starts." [Department of Education Official]

"In this state the educational establishment almost forfeited its right, if it is a right, to be the educational leaders. We in this great reform movement have almost become reactionaries. We were responding to what someone else said we ought to do to improve education. I'm glad to say that that is balancing out a little bit now." [Department of Education Staff]

"I think one of the major reasons the Legislature took such an active role in the reforms in Florida was that the State Department of Education has never really reacted to crises. . . . There has not been a kind of dynamic, creative leadership one would expect to come from the Department. If reform was to occur in this state, it had to come from the Legislature." [Anonymous]

"The department has just sat back and taken whatever the Legislature gave it and really wasn't activist in terms of standing up and saying, 'No! That's no good!' Even the unions, we've got three major unions in the state, so there's not even any leadership among the union leadership." [Department of Education Staff]

"There are those who say that the department's greatest contribution to reform is that they didn't get in the way, rather than be the innovators or the implementors." [Legislature]

"All of the earlier stuff kind of led itself into the modern day reform in the public schools — those types of programs mentioned in *In Search of Excellence* [sic]. We take some pride in the fact that most of those recommendations that came out of the president's council were already underway in the state of Florida. Maybe because of some of the people that were associated with them. We had a Commission on Secondary Education made up of the leadership of both the House and Senate, and [named in interview] was the consultant for that purpose. They came out with a lot of recommendations that were quite similar to those that came out of the national forum." [Legislature]

At this point the comments turn to the state's education study committee, an organization and an effort that receive mixed reviews.

"In your zeal to reach for change, you're likely to pick up a shiny penny and put it where it doesn't fit [sic]. The governor's committee was patterned after the national study; the conclusions were about the same. In fact, the chairman of the group that headed it has been accused of having brought his conclusions with him to the state." [Department of Education Staff]

"In Florida, the reform movement, if you want to call it that, I guess started with the Governor's Commission on the Secondary Schools, which was established in 1982. There had been a lot of discontent with the quality of graduates from the high schools. We heard for a long time from employers and some college and university sources that the kids couldn't read, and they couldn't write. The Governor appointed this commission to begin to take a look at what was wrong, with a combination of educators and legislators." [Legislature]

"One of the keys as to why a lot of this commission's recommendations were enacted into law was that there were two senators on it who the very next year, the report was issued in the winter of '82, and beginning with the '83 session, made it their agenda. One was the president of the Senate and the other was the chairman of the Education Committee. The chairman made it his program, his legacy. And all the energies, all the Senate energies, were directed toward that end." [Legislature]

"The commission report was criticized because the author [named] had a tendency to overstate things, but the gist of it, the findings, no one argued with. This is where we got into merit pay. The report was incorporated into the Senate program, which did not include merit pay. Our governor wanted to beat Lamar Alexander and get in some kind of merit pay, thank you! We had a situation where (because of the changes being proposed, going to a longer school day for the high schools) things would cost some additional dollars. Talking about where those dollars were going to come from caught the attention of the business community, which was concerned about talk of increases in taxation. While they were willing to pay for the changes in the high school program, they let it be known that they were not interested in providing enough dollars to give all teachers an across-the-board raise. This led them to come down on merit pay, which would provide increases only for the best teachers." [Legislature]

"There was a great fervor of reform led by the speaker of the House and the president of the Senate, both of whom, at the same time (in my opinion a very dangerous thing to have happen) really almost had a contest to see who could create the most reform in education." [Anonymous]

"No lawmaker in a leadership position opposed any of the reform measures put forth. The Senate did not advocate the master teaching program proposed by the House but went along, saying, 'okay, we'll take this program if you take our reforms.' [Question: "Where was the State Department of Education in all of this?"] Getting their best hold — hanging on. They were not in a leadership position. They didn't attempt to fight it." [Legislature]

"That year, 1983, wasn't an election year, and that helped in terms of the unions. They generally supported the reforms, and during all of the thrashing around on the master teacher program, the unions. . . (We have a split in Florida, with large AFT and NEA organizations, and they ying and yang [sic] around a lot, and that's one way, to a certain extent, lawmakers can neutralize the union effort), the Legislature involved union representatives in discussions of the merit pay. While they didn't support it, object to it, they at least took the position that, 'okay, we'll sit down with you and attempt to work it out'." [Legislature]

"About this time that these reforms were considered, because there had to be some buy-out money, there had to be some money for teachers' salaries to keep the unions from going absolutely crazy. There had to be some of these things — the time you bring about change is when you have some money. It sure is difficult to bring about change when you don't have money, and so we needed money. The most appropriate place for money in the state of Florida at that time was through the business community. They had an active interest in education. One of their demands was to adopt some kind of merit pay plan as a condition of their increased physical participation." [Legislature]

"Business and industry pushed the hell out of this merit pay stuff. I'm sure their purposes were different than the governor's. Their objectives were, I think, very calculated: Here is one more issue we can raise for a few more years that will divert from the true task at hand, which we already understand will have to occur at some time, and that's increase the taxes." [Teacher]

"The House was quite interested in merit pay, also in science and high tech. There was a great deal of posturing — merit pay was not a big interest in the Senate. We negotiated the bill that passed; basically, we reached a compromise. We went with the standards for graduation, the optional seven-period day, and some dollars for these programs. And we went with a commission to study merit pay. We had merit pay with a year's delay on it. Anyway, the legislation finally passed. The funding was not passed. We dealt with that in special session." [Legislature]

"Because of this contest between the two houses to see how much they could come up with, rather than having any scrutiny of the quality of the legislation, they had trade-offs — 'We'll take this, if you take that.' I can't remember how many pages the actual bill was; there were two years of this — in both years there was an omnibus education bill — 200 pages both years — Incredible!" [Education Lobby]

"An omnibus education act, which is a euphemism for a daisy chain thing, a bill that's got a bunch of crap in it that everybody's going home with, was passed in 1984. One of the things that happened in 1983, as part of the reform legislation, was a thing called the Quality Instruction Incentives Council. It consisted of business leaders, educators, and lay people (although the lay people were board members, so it's hard to call them lay people); they all had an investment. The council was to hammer out the nuts and bolts of the merit pay issue and make recommendations. This was one of the devices used to quell opposition to the dollars the reforms would cost and also to deal with the fact that we did not have an up and running merit pay program by the time the '83 session adjourned. This council had a dozen meetings over the interim [between sessions], essentially the same meeting 12 times." [Legislature]

"I used to come away from those [Incentives Council] meetings with the impression that a lot of those business leaders were quite a bit dumber than I thought, or the business of public education was a great deal more complicated than anybody knew. Nothing came out of the meetings other than a solidification of the business position and the educators' position, with legislators sort of standing by and taking a look. Anyway, the merit schools plan was developed, by which incentive pay would be awarded to teachers based on how well kids in a particular school did from one year to another on a standardized test. This was made part of the Omnibus Education Act of 1984. This particular program is split right down union lines, with the AFT affiliates buying it and the NEA affiliates opposing it." [Legislature]

"I don't think the Quality Instruction Incentives Council ever accomplished anything, but I think basically because the unions pretty much torpedoed that effort." [Legislature]

"I think a good deal of the reforms that have been promulgated will just be absorbed or they will make education more bureaucratic. They won't make education serve the needs of the country and the people any better. And when I say this, I am not suggesting there was a nefarious intent on anyone's part, or that people did not give a lot of thought to what they were doing, just that it's easy to appreciate how little we know and how easy it is to exaggerate the kind of planned impact we can have on the schools by just going in and introducing common-sensical kinds of reforms. One of the things that makes me think that only a minimal amount of damage will be done is that these people in the schools have ways of accommodating reforms and making them serve their best purposes." [University Professor]

"We have in Florida now a situation where a lot of the so-called improvement policies and strategies do not have the support of the people who have to implement them, and my experience has been that you normally don't have a high level of success when the people implementing a policy are not committed to that policy, and haven't bought into and don't share the beliefs and values that the policy holds. So the [Department of Education] has been devoting a lot of energy to a bottoms-up change process by starting at the school site and working with the school site administrators, principals mainly, to change the way they do their jobs and build a bottoms-up change process. So there are two sets of reforms going on in Florida. One of them is top-down, and the other one is bottom-up." [Department of Education Official]

"So it's very important that we have legislative leadership and a governor who understand how the quality of the future of this state is going to depend on how well we are able to use state resources for critical policy issues rather than just spreading it out on an even basis and being average in everything." [Department of Education Staff]

"We have elections coming up when many of these seats will change. The people who gave us top-down programs are not running for office." [Department of Education Staff]

"It'll be chipped away at from now until it's turned into pablum. That's the usual procedure." [Department of Education Staff]

"You can pass whatever you want to, but if you don't have the resources with which to implement whatever you've passed, just plain forget it!" [Department of Education Official]

The story of Florida's education reform efforts ends, therefore, on an uncertain note. Much of this uncertainty stems from the controversy surrounding the merit pay and merit schools programs within the education community, and much of that relates to perceptions of insufficient funding. At the time these remarks were made, efforts to convert the merit pay program into a career ladder system seemed well advanced, but that may be another story. In any case, the activities of the Governor and Legislature vis-a-vis *the state education establishment in Florida stand in some contrast with experiences in Washington, the state that serves as the subject of the next section.*

Washington

"I dare say you're wondering why I don't put my arm around your waist," said the Duchess after a pause; "the reason is, that I'm doubtful about the temper of your flamingo . . ."

Lewis Carroll Alice in Wonderland

An appreciation of educational reform in Washington state must include an awareness that it is one of the few "full state funding" states — virtually all of the costs of operating the basic education program are borne by the state. Nearly 80 percent of the average district budget is made up of state funds, which, in turn, comprise nearly 50 percent of the state general fund budget. By court decree, anything the Legislature includes within the definition of "basic education" must be paid for by the state.

In 1982, the Legislature established a select committee, bearing the formidable statutory designation of "Temporary Committee on Educational Policies, Structure, and Management" [TCEPSAM], to review the structure of public education (K-12 through higher education) including the question of whether there should be a single system with a chancellor over all of education. Vocational education also was an important initial object. At the time of the committee's creation, the issue was not educational reform in the meaning the term has come to assume, but the national movement overtook the effort and influenced it accordingly. The Committee's approach was essentially analytical, drawing heavily upon staff research and the testimony of professionals in the field obtained through frequent meetings. An interim committee report was required by the enabling legislation, and one was presented to the Legislature for consideration during the 1984 session. Limited legislative action on educational matters was the result, largely because it was not a regular, budget session.

In the meantime, the Washington Roundtable, a business association, was formed [1983] and education was identified as one of its high priority areas. Unlike such organizations in other states, however, which have relied upon consultant assistance, it elected to perform its own research program. Still another organization, The Citizens Education Center Northwest, which had formed during the school finance reform days of the *mid-1970s, proceeded with a grass roots effort of its own. The three elected to "walk together but stand alone," and each prepared its own legislative program.*

Following the 1984 interim legislative session, all of the groups went back to work in anticipation of 1985. Public hearings were held, and final reports were prepared. That legislative session, however, opened in an atmosphere of fiscal uncertainty, and a general unwillingness to extend the definition of basic education was soon manifest. With a few statutory exceptions [the committee's major higher education proposals were accepted], the session ended with no definitive legislative action on the reform proposals.

In 1982, when the study committee was created, the governor was a Republican with some interest in education but whose attention was occupied by a pervasive fiscal crisis. He was succeeded in 1984 by a Democrat, who assumed office just as the final committee and Roundtable education reform programs were presented to the Legislature. Fiscal uncertainties, however, along with the impression that the study committee was a creature of an earlier administration, counseled gubernatorial constraint.

Although the study committee was graced with four legislative members, unlike the examples of Texas, Florida, and Illinois where these members formed a "key lobby" within the Legislature, neither the committee nor the Roundtable were able to organize a strong legislative block. The education department and state school chief were generally opposed to the reform proposals, preferring, instead, increased funding through the existing "formula" system. The rest of the formal educational structure followed suit. The result in Washington was the absence of a horizontal, policy level coalition, and a very slim vertical organization, one that was weakened by the lack of support of teachers, administrators, and other professional associations.

Many insist that Washington had its school reform movement during the 1970s. While those efforts did lead to the Basic Education Act, in fact, this was a school finance reform effort with little attention directed to such issues as student achievement or "educational quality." Unlike most of the other states discussed in this report, Washington did not erupt with a groundswell of agitation for reform. Rather, what began as a study directed to school governance was transformed into a program focused on quality, largely through the national agitation and what became the temper of the times.

"The whole thing keeps coming back to taxes, especially the situation during the 1970s, when there was such a heavy burden on the property tax, a growing reliance on levies but with different evaluations. This led to an inequitable system which then led to unhappiness and attacks on the school system, all of which were covers for the more general unhappiness with taxes. All of this was part of the Proposition 13 syndrome. This, in turn, led to the massive levy failures in 1974-75, which forced the Legislature to seek relief. But the legislators felt something was wrong with the schools, since people were rejecting levies. In the meantime, the people who were running the budget in the Legislature were saying that if there was no accountability, there would be no money. The problem is the more accountability you have, the more you divert money from the classroom to administration." [Legislature]

"When the Legislature defined basic education (1976-77), it was as a means of providing some accountability among the districts in return for providing more money. The levy lid [Note: the legislature established a lid of 10 percent of the state appropriation on local excess levies, a lid that would be phased-in over several biennia. The goal has not been reached, and the betting is that it will be raised to 20 percent.] was simply a legislative decision to justify an infusion of more state money." [Legislature]

"The weighted student-funding formula in use [in Washington] before the Basic Education Act was good, the best in the country. There were 750,000 students, and 90,000 'assumed students,' with the latter representing the figure resulting from the enrichments allowed for special programs and needs. This was difficult to explain, and legislators had trouble visualizing 'assumed students' — the general public even more so, especially when some districts had more assumed students than others. So, in order to get something more explainable, we went to 50 certificated staff per 1,000 students. Not all certificated staff are teachers, however, and this, too, is confusing. Now we are trying to go to 20-to-1 student-teacher ratio." [Legislature]

"The tension between state funding and local control is very real. Now the state is paying 100 percent and calling the shots in great detail, e.g., in pupil transportation where the specifications of school buses are described. This requires an administrative staff just to comply. There are not many decisions left at the local level. How can you provide the resources and leave local flexibility? This was the question the Legislature was grappling with when it created the Temporary Committee (Temporary Committee on

Educational Policies, Structure, and Management)." [Department of Education Official]

"The early [business] Roundtable thoughts were that there were problems with education, it cost a lot of money, the private school exodus, and so on, but there was no feeling of total loss. It was a more generalized feeling, a feeling that Washington was better than the nation as a whole." [Business Representative]

"There was no general sense of crisis here. People, at the state level at least, did not feel the system was going to hell in a hand basket. Rightly or wrongly, we felt we had a pretty good school system. More recent information on test scores and drop-out rates suggest that we may have been a little optimistic. Probably the greatest fear had to do with funding, where would we get the money. Maybe also some agencies, especially higher education, felt that K-12 had too great a draw on the budget. There was some uneasiness ,too, over the private school thing in Seattle, where people were taking their kids out of the public schools and sending them to the private schools, and this said something about how they felt about the public schools." [Legislature]

"If you can't define the problem, why do you need change?" [Legislature]

"The State Board of Education was not the organization to lead reform. Collectively, the Board is not disposed to go to the mat with the [State Superintendent]. It views itself as more of a social gathering. There is no disposition to rock the boat. More recently, people of independent minds have joined the Board and they are not willing to accept [the State Superintendent's] dictates." [School Board Member]

This was the situation in 1982, when the legislature was called into special session to consider budget rescissions associated with a fiscal crisis. During that session, the Senate bill establishing the Temporary Committee was enacted.

"The original thought behind the [study] committee legislation had very little to do with quality. The real interest was accountability, and especially vocational education. The prime reason was governance and structure. The bill included a lot more than that, but this was its purpose. Some stuff was added as it went through the Legislature, largely to gain votes — a specific reference to early childhood education is an example. Ironically, that was inserted by a member who was very skeptical about pre-school programs." [Legislature]

"The Temporary Committee's scope, to review all of education in the state, was too broad, but it probably did take the Washington Roundtable [the business association also studying education] off the hook on breadth. Maybe it also took most of the heat." [Business Representative]

"It took a while before the members were appointed by the governor, since people were required to apply for positions on the committee. Some of those that were appointed alienated a lot of education people right from the start. There were some early opinions expressed about unions and administrators that were not very positive. I'm not sure how you get around this. You need opinionated people." [Legislature]

"The governor created a committee that immediately alienated everyone in the educational professions. Immediately it became the enemy. Not only were there no educators on it, but the members were anti-everything, in our minds. We saw them as anti-union." [Teachers' Union Official]

"The committee's workload was too great. If it is done again, it will be necessary to reduce the workload. The Washington Roundtable, by contrast, was able to zero in on a few issues and bring pressure on a few points. Unfortunately, they didn't use the extra time to come up with ideas about where the money would come from to pay for them. In any case, if you try to do too many things in too big a hurry, you get backlash." [Department of Education Staff]

"The Roundtable had the benefit of a lot of free help. The Temporary Committee, on the other hand, was spread thin and was unable to spring additional help. The Roundtable also came out against a high school exit test, and that helped." [Department of Education Staff]

The 1984 session represented the first opportunity for the Legislature to consider reform proposals in the context of the national phenomenon. Several omnibus bills were introduced, including those prepared by the Temporary Committee, the Department of Education, and the governor's office. The net effect was mutual cancellation, which was likely in any event, given the need for additional revenue to fund the recommendations.

"The timing of the committee's [1984] Interim Report was bad, coming as it did during the off-session [non-budget session]. It telegraphed the committee's final recommendations and kept the educational groups on guard. The teacher education people in the colleges and universities are a good example." [Legislature]

"The problem with both the committee and the Roundtable reports reduces to xenophobia, as almost as a body, the educational community rose up in righteous indignation. Even so, the money excuses reduced to the NIH [Not Invented Here] factor. They would say, 'Until they tell us where to get the money, we won't buy it.' But this really was the result of the NIH factor." [Legislature]

"The committee recommendations made the Roundtable stuff look better." [Business Representative]

"The Roundtable's approach to research made the Temporary Committee's report look like a Talmudic treatise." [School Administrator]

"You could sense a shift during the 1984 session, as the Committee came in with its interim report and omnibus bill amid a great deal of legislative excitement. But as people realized there was no money, all of this began to change, and legislators began frantically to look for a way out." [Citizen]

"NIH was a significant factor. The committee also got off to a bad start by the cavalier, 'I know what's good for you' attitude of the governor's aide. This led to a sort of 'Who is this guy?' response." [School Board Member]

"I'm not that sure that people are all that concerned. There is rhetoric, yeah, and the Temporary Committee had a public opinion poll that showed a lot of concern for education, but where was the commitment? The number one priority is health. This will increase as the population ages and the school age population declines. People also are excited about defense, and sports, and the relief of stress. These things define where something like education sits. It comes in fifth or sixth." [University Professor]

"There must be a perceived sense of the problem, and there must be leadership from the governor. Most people in Washington don't know there is an educational problem." [University Professor]

"Where's the excitement? Where's the public clamor about education? I don't hear the legislative hot line ringing off the hook." [Legislature]

As the session adjourned, and the legislators returned to their districts, the various study groups returned to the task at hand, in anticipation of the window of opportunity that would be presented by the fall elections and the 1985 regular legislative session. The window began to close around October, however, as the revenue forecasts proved less promising than hoped, and no new taxes became an important election theme. The combination of insufficient fund surpluses to pay for educational improvement, a new governor whose policy priorities had not yet fully *formed, and generally hostile professional associations virtually assured that little in the way of change was likely to be mandated by the Legislature.*

"Various segments of the education community began to form into something like an unholy alliance against all of the reformers. This is ironic, since even though everyone speaks of the 'educational community' as a single thing, it is far from monolithic. Superintendents complain to the Legislature about the state board, and unions and administrators are always at each others' throats. The Roundtable and committee reports brought them together." [State Board of Education Member]

"The Temporary Committee had public hearings all over the state. There must have been 20, most of which went on well past midnight. The halls were full — probably several thousand people attended, but they were mostly education people, teachers and administrators. The public types were mostly home schoolers. Most stayed home to watch television." [Citizen]

"The committee came down hard pretty early on vocational education, and this alienated those people. Some of the public hearings were almost dominated by education people worried about voc-tech institutes and home economics." [Citizen]

"In the beginning there was a lot of uncertainty. The principals were worried about the committee's proposal to eliminate their tenure. The committee staff agreed to work with them on a bill, to see if there could be a compromise. An agreement was reached, and everyone seemed happy. Then the principals came before the Education Committee and testified against it." [Citizen]

"During the 1985 session, and based on the general lack of success with the omnibus bill the committee prepared in 1984, it came in with almost 30 separate pieces of legislation. They should have stayed with the omnibus approach. The separate bills allowed people to pick them off one-by-one." [Legislature]

"The committee bills were heard by the various committees, and that was good. They got a fair hearing." [Citizen]

"There was not one instance, that I can recall, when a representative of an education group testified in favor of a committee or Roundtable bill. They always began with, 'I want to express my admiration and appreciation for the fine work the committee has done, but . . .'" [Citizen]

"It was probably a mistake for the committee to tackle the governance issues — it offended people unnecessarily. There also came a point when there were too many blue-ribbon committees, too many mixed signals. If there is going to be a study committee, there should be only one. Some people looked at the Roundtable and asked why it was necessary to have the Temporary Committee. Others might have asked the same thing about the Roundtable. Sometimes they were complementary and sometimes they were not." [Legislature]

"Then, there was the [state superintendent's race]. Too many committee members backed [the loser]." [Department of Education Staff]

"I especially had problems with the Roundtable. They were coming in calling for centralization in education at the very time the dominant trend in business was toward decentralization. They also refused to put their money where their mouth was. We were never able to pin them down on support for a tax increase." [Legislature]

"Some of my colleagues' attitudes toward the Roundtable proposals disturbed me. Sometimes I felt they were too obsequious, too enamored of business' wisdom when they were talking to members of that lofty organization, and maybe a little too critical when they were by themselves. There's a word for this . . . ['disingenuous?'] That's it! Thank you." [School Administrator]

"I don't think anybody ever originally expected what came out. The committee report and process was very good. Originally, I think the Legislature thought they would give Senator [named in interview] his study committee bill and get him out of their hair [in 1982] so they could get a budget passed. They really didn't think much would come of it. But the members did their work, and so did the staff, and they learned. They involved the public and tried to involve the educators. There were some bad starts, but some of the people who were most opposed to unions later told me that they were not so sure now. Their report was a good as any I've seen in the country." [Legislature]

"The committee report was generally excellent. Little points might have been better left alone for political reasons, but it is a good agenda for the future. It moves to excellence, and then it begins to address the problems of minorities. The process was very close to the kind that universities use." [University Professor]

"The public press speaks of splintering and internal divisiveness in our society. It used to be said that Republican and Democrat approaches to national politics were trial balloons — the real action taken was based on consensus. We did not have sharp divisions here; for example, there was no labor party. Now there seem to be tribal loyalties. There was always a trial run search for national consensus. Now there is an emergence of special interests. This presents a troublesome future. Committees to develop preliminary agendas are all the more important. We need communications with both executive and legislative leadership. Royal commissions used to be used to quiet dissension within an area, using people from the outside. The Temporary Committee got further with legislative particulars than the national [Bell] committee. It's better to get the dead cats on the table. Honesty is the best policy — get it on the table. The committee's failure was conditioned by politics in Olympia, by the politics of education. A number of committee members went through a learning experience." [Former Member of Select Committee]

"The change of governors worked against the committee's proposals." [Department of Education]

"Timing was the critical thing. There was the Washington Roundtable agenda, with no resources, and the political situation contributed to diverting the agenda. We can say we can do things with no money, but we've never been able to." [Department of Education Staff]

"The most distinctive feature in this country is the interest of the business community in school reform. About 20 years ago, in Rochester, the business community got its fingers burned for too much involvement in education, and it backed away. Now they are back. They failed to convince the Legislature here because of their unwillingness to confront the resource problem. Saying that you can accomplish change through internal reallocations is not exactly delivering an incitingly new and dramatic message." [University Professor]

"If something is new, the money becomes really important. You must provide for the basic program first. Anything new must be added to that. Once something is in place, the pressure is on to keep it there. You don't see a lot happening in a hurry." [Department of Education Staff]

"The education community is bound by common interests. You see unity in some areas. [The levy issue] is an example; salaries are another. Educators are receptive to ideas from the outside, as long as they are involved in their development. You need a lot of consensus building. Neither the Roundtable, nor the committee did this. Actually, education is fairly faddish." [Department of Education Official]

"There's a very political side as well. You can't ignore that. If you want to accomplish something, you have to move long before January — talk to a lot of people, to the right people. Let them know what and why, and why it's important to them. Legislators want good policy, local discretion, and effectiveness that can be empirically demonstrated. A good bill represents a balance of the three. They want nothing that will lay a specific program on the districts." [Department of Education Staff]

"As the state gets close to the 50 percent point in terms of [the amount of] its budget going to education, something like an invisible barrier rises to block further expansion. I wonder if there is a sort of unstated legislative resistance to going beyond that point for any single program." [Citizen]

"The Committee ended just as things were beginning to happen, as the staff was starting to learn." [Legislature]

"Things are changing. There is a lot of discussion and interest, but it will come one step at a time. There will be no education reform bills enacted in Washington." [Department of Education Staff].

"The reform movement is dead. Now the talk is of survival, how to retain education's share of the pie. Maybe what we need is a chancellor of education in this state." [Legislature]

The last state in this series is Texas, where the reactions to the work of the governor's select committee were much more pronounced than Washington.

Texas

"On the Wings of Eagles"

The seeds of education reform in Texas began to sprout when Governor White, running for election on the promise of salary increases for teachers, failed to achieve that goal during the 1983 session. A resolution establishing a select committee to study education — The Select Committee on Public Education (SCOPE) — was adopted as a compromise. This committee, chaired by White appointee H. Ross Perot, a Dallas businessman, proposed legislation for consideration during a special session called by the Governor for that purpose. House Bill 72, an omnibus education bill, was enacted. The Texas reform program also included a major tax measure.

Texas is generally considered a "top-down" reform state, in that the study committee was not perceived as representative of educational interests, although observers agree that most of its recommendations can be traced ultimately to educators, and to antipathy among the state board and superintendent and the Study Committee. The state-level educational establishment in Texas, therefore, was not present in strength in the horizontal, policy coalition, although the presence of representatives of the executive and legislative branches, the governor, particularly the lieutenant governor, and key legislators, was strong. There is not a widespread perception of a strong vertical coalition there, as many retain the impression that the formal education associations were precluded from the process. To quote from one analysis:

> *"House Bill 72 was in many ways a highly centralized top-down reform, directed by the state's political leadership and a few influential individuals like H. Ross Perot. In contrast to reforms in other states, which have involved the educational community and interested citizens in order to build consensus on reform, the changes in Texas took place with relatively little consultation with local educators and almost no participation by parents and other interested citizens."*[13]

The involvement of the key figures was both consistent, in terms of their membership on the select committee, and sequential. The governor played an important initiating role, although, again, it was a coalition of political leaders, including the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the House that ultimately were responsible for the achievement of the program. Unlike other states where the state board and school chief were able to influence the results, in Texas they were not.

In many respects, the active stage of the education reform movement in Texas commenced with the 1981 enactment of House Bill 246, which was directed to curricular standardization through state-level identification of a core curriculum and measures concerning attendance and promotion. A Nation at Risk *was a timely factor in all of this, and it very likely had an influence on the deliberations of SCOPE. An equally important consideration was the conviction of the chairman and members that improvements in education were necessary to justify the increases in taxes and spending that would be required for increased salaries. In any event, as in other states, the final committee report and HB 72, which may not have had an initial reform imperative, in the end went well beyond the subject of salaries.*

Whatever their feelings about the presence or absence of the participatory model in Texas, many agree that some ameliorative attention to the educational system was in order.

"Reform was needed. Some districts did not accept their responsibilities, and there were tremendous discrepancies. There are 1,042 school districts in Texas. I don't think reform has hurt Texas at all. It has broken up the 'good ol' boy network.' The superintendents usually came up through the ranks of the coaches — three-quarters of them, at least. The State Board of Education was the same way; these people had been around for a long time and did whatever they wanted. The system was bad. Ross Perot is supposed to have said 'You could teach a mynah bird to graduate in the Texas system,' and he was probably right." [Citizen]

"HB 72 was the first time since 1949 that a comprehensive reformation of public education had occurred. In 1949, the Gilmour-Aiken Act was enacted, establishing the minimum foundation program, and with that requirements for teachers to be certified, and a salary schedule. These things carried over to 1984. That act was almost sacrosanct." [Governor's Office]

"The country was growing less and less dependent on oil and gas, so our economy was in flux. Our future lies where the nation's future lies, in information services. This requires our own people to be well-trained. The only renewable resource we have is human." [Governor's Office]

"In my experience, this concern about education is a cyclical thing that seems to surface about once in every generation. The last time was in the early '60s, following Sputnik, and there was a great deal of hand-wringing but nothing significant that happened. That opportunity was missed and we had to wait for another generation." [lieutenant governor's Office]

"We had another select committee on public education in 1979, the same name [SCOPE], that was the result of Texas Education Agency interest. We had members coming in with legislation to establish mandatory competency testing, the whole need to get on top of achievement scores, all of these things were on the table in 1979. This was the beginning. The next session, 1981, saw an even stronger effort, as the earlier efforts had failed, but in 1981 we saw HB 246 pass, which established the essential elements of a statewide curriculum. Before that there were only cryptic references to what should be taught. That process [getting to the implementation of HB 246] took four years, and was only implemented this fall." [Legislature]

"There was some frustration. We had a Republican governor [William Clements] who set up a committee on higher education, which completed its work after Governor White, a Democrat, came in. This sort of invalidated that report. Had a Republican governor come in, those recommendations [on higher education] would have gone somewhere." [Legislature]

"The lieutenant governor [William Hobby] was a prime pusher to change the system. He had a different agenda than the governor; he wanted to change some things in the school finance area. He wanted to get away from a system based on personnel costs to a weighted student base." [School Board Member]

"We helped precipitate the convergence of all this. It did not come out the way we wanted, although in some instances (financing, equalization, education as an economic priority) it did. Texas was behind the national average in salaries and low on student achievement, and we were beating the drum loudly, and had some success with Governor Clements, from '79 through '82, but that had been painful, and we had to push hard to overcome the economy-minded administration. We had to accelerate to catch up, so we spent a lot of time, energy, and political capital trying to move that agenda. So when Mark White ran for governor, we talked his people into making that [salaries] one of the centerpieces of his effort. We were successful." [Teachers' Union Representative]

Following the gubernatorial election in fall, 1982, the new Governor turned to the Legislature for realization of his commitment to improvements in teacher salaries.

"When the [1983] session started, because of divisiveness within the educational community, no one could put together a salary package that would sell. The lieutenant governor and the speaker, and the business people, were not willing to come up with the money because it would take a tax increase." [Teachers' Union Representative]

"The governorship of Texas is weak compared with other states. This has been the case since Reconstruction. Following Reconstruction there was a long period of humiliation that ended when the governor the Union Army had installed barricaded himself in the [Capitol] building. Because of popular resentment, the 1876 state constitution took the executive power and diffused it into every nook and cranny. The comptroller sets the budget limit. The treasurer has a lot of power. The lieutenant governor is the most powerful, by custom. There is nothing written down. . . . He is president of the Senate, appoints all the committee chairmen, and calls all of the shots. . . . He also serves on a couple of pretty powerful boards. The Legislative Education Board is one of the most powerful things to come out of this. He alternates the chair." [Legislature]

"The lieutenant governor is unusual in this state. Usually they don't have staff. I believe this office is more powerful here than the governor's. This also is the case with the comptroller. The Legislative Budget Board which the lieutenant governor chairs is responsible for putting together the legislative budget. The appropriations committees work from these documents. The governor submits a budget during the beginning of the session, but it is used very little." [Legislature]

"The big thing for [Governor] White during his first session was teacher salaries. He had promised to increase them during the election campaign. But the money was not there. He was talking about 24 percent over the biennium. Career ladders also were introduced. But we had a salary system based on a weighted schedule tied to years of experience and highest degree. Trying to apply a differentiated salary system to the present scale would not work. The session was coming to a close and the governor was being chastised for not delivering." [Legislature]

"As an alternative, the governor's office sent down a resolution calling for a study of education. The lieutenant governor agreed with the need for a study, but the following day there was a joint resolution in both houses with a totally different structure than the governor had announced, and this involved the speaker and the lieutenant governor, each of whom would appoint one-third of the members, and the governor would appoint the remaining one-third. They just sucked it right out from under him." [Education Lobbyist]

"The Select Committee was established by concurrent resolution. In writing it, we asked for appointments by the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker, with the governor given authority to appoint the chairman, which he did. So in asking them to serve and to appoint, and pointing out it was to be a cooperative effort, we ensured their participation. The resolution started in the House when it became apparent there was no action going to happen on new school funding in 1983. This happened about the same time as *A Nation at Risk.*" [Governor's Office]

There is widespread acknowledgment that the governor's appointment of H. Ross Perot as chairman of SCOPE was instrumental to the success of the reform measures in that state. The chairman has become something of a legend among observers in Texas, as various comments imply. While not all consider themselves among his disciples, virtually all speak of him admiringly, if sometimes begrudgingly so.

"The way this came about is instructive. It came about in large part at the insistence of the speaker, who said he wasn't going to put more money into salaries and pass a tax bill unless there was a current study of the whole problem. So he made a tremendously significant contribution. The other significant contribution was Governor White's identification of Ross Perot as the man to do it, and indeed he was. Perot has a greater ability to identify an issue than anyone I've seen. He also has tremendous organizational abilities." [lieutenant governor's Office]

"I don't think anyone expected the Governor to appoint Perot, least of all the Legislature, but he had to get business people behind it." [Teachers' Union Representative]

"When the salary proposal failed, a resolution passed creating a new Select Committee on Public Education." [SCOPE].

I don't know if people at that point were recognizing what was developing. Everyone felt studied to death at this point. We did not see the potential, that teachers would not be appointed, that there would be no relation to public education." [Legislature]

"The lieutenant governor was not impressed with what was going on in the teaching profession. They decided to keep professionals off of the study committee. It was a 15 member committee with three State Board of Education members on it, which was 18. When they needed a vote, they considered the Governor, lieutenant governor, speaker, and comptroller as part of the committee, so they could vote. So they rode it any way they wanted to. The members were primarily businessmen, largely conservative. The governor chose H. Ross Perot as chairman. The funny thing was that he took over the committee. He spent a lot of his own money to run it. He brought people in to staff it." [School Board Member]

"Perot was appointed. We were all kind of shocked to have a Republican chairman." [Legislature]

"The profession did not expect anything from the study, as had been the case with earlier blue ribbon reports, most of which were sitting on the shelf. When you think about the cost, they didn't think the Legislature and the governor had the courage to stand up and call for these things." [Governor's Office]

"This was all part of a grand design. Absolutely! We knew we had to bring in elements that previously had been excluded. Business and industry had not been previously included. We knew we had to talk about the role of education in state development." [Governor's Office]

"It worked out all right, but SCOPE was out of control, the governor's control. He had a man in charge who was used to doing it his own way. He was not afraid of any legislative body; he had no political concerns. This is why I think it came out the way it did." [Legislature]

"Perot is the most fascinating person I have met. To watch him mesmerize people . . . his approach is mild but sincere. He will take a room full of angry superintendents and bring them around by his dedication and sincerity." [Legislature]

"I don't brake for Ross Perot." [Texas Bumpersticker]

"The SCOPE's success was due to the personal involvement of Mr. Perot and his personal leadership, and the involvement of people associated with him, and the broad base for the reforms among the political leadership." [School Administrator]

"When he got the appointment, he did some things I've never seen. He dedicated himself totally to it. He identified all of the education groups and made personal calls on them. He laid out a work agenda where people were expected to devote three days a week for a year. He started visiting schools, over 300 of them. He brought in all kinds of consulting groups. He told everyone they would not write a report; they would write legislation." [School Board Member]

"We really worked the Select Committee hard, but Perot ran his own show. He had his own staff; he took tons of input, and did a very good job. We had a good relationship with him on some of the issues, e.g., the need for administrators to know more. He used us for a resource, but he used a lot of other people too." [Teachers' Union Representative]

"Perot upset a lot of apple carts. He's from Dallas." [Education Lobbyist]

"He brought his own staff, and paid for them himself from his organization. They reminded you of a group of secret service men, built and dressed the same way." [Education Lobbyist]

"Perot [is said to have] said 'there's only so much an organization can handle. These school administrators will nickel-and-dime and marginalize you to death. I want to nuke them. I want to hit them with so much we are going to shake the shit out of them. The only way I can do that is overwhelm them.' So he had a deliberate strategy of just throwing everything at them, to blast them out of what he saw as their complacency. He had a tremendously low opinion of local school administrators, most of whom were products of a 'good ol' boy system, and a lot of sympathy for the teachers. He formed these impressions from his personal travels. He felt the teachers worked very hard, were underpaid, and had a lot of potential, but the system really had to be shaken hard." [University Professor]

"Will Rogers never knew Ross Perot." [Texas Bumpersticker]

"Over time there began to develop conflict between Perot and a State Board of Education member on the committee [named in interview]. By the time the study was completed there was a great deal of conflict between the two. The state board guy just stopped going to meetings. This was in part because of the talk about an appointed board to replace the elected one and in part because of the talk over the status quo. The board members felt that while improvements were needed, there had been a great deal done over time and put in place. Also, a distance developed between the committee and the [Texas Education] agency over time." [State Department of Education Staff]

The SCOPE methodology, traveling extensively and receiving testimony, exemplifies the perceptual dissonance between educators and political observers over the subject of communications. Much of the

testimony the committee received, and which presumably influenced the committee program, was provided by educators. Yet, the prevalent impression among professionals in the state is that the education profession was shut out of the process.

"There is a perception that the ideas were Perot's. But I really think that virtually most of them came from educators. The Select Committee went all over the state. Perot was tireless, and he drove the committee. He received input from all over, much of which came from educators. After it was all over, educators could not understand why people felt it was done over their opposition. People looked upon it as anti-establishment, but the vast majority of the changes came from educators. The absolute cap on K-3 class size, came from them. 'No Pass/No Play' came from them, but when these things went through the Select Committee they lost their identity." [State Department of Education Official]

"The genesis of all this [HB 72] was what the Select Committee heard people saying. They tried to give the public and the teaching profession everything they asked for: discipline, absences, extra-curriculars, social promotions, standards; they heard the administrators talk about equity, adequacy; the public talk about illiterate teachers, misspelled words; they heard from the kids. Everything came from various groups. As you read the law you can relate sections back to the complaints of various groups. The select committee responded to all of them. They gave teachers salary increases, but they required tests. There was always a little medicine with the sugar." [School Administrator]

"The select committee met every week. We watched this group tour the state and stir up controversy, The State Board of Education complained they would not get re-elected if they tried all this stuff. This probably led to the decision to remove them from that danger by replacing them with an appointed board." [Legislature]

"When Perot reached the point where he had made up his mind, he sat down on his own and drafted his plan, with his consultants. He put his own agenda together, spent his own money, and got away with it." [Teachers' Union Official]

"Perot's people ran the select committee. There were no educators there. There were fights and disagreements, so they had some split votes. But he persuaded them to go along, and they got into the session. There was a lot of opposition to parts of it, especially the appointed State Board of Education, but they put more pressure on the Legislature than I've ever seen, and essentially they just sort of turned the world around." [Educational Lobbyist]

All of the work came to a head during the special session called by the Governor to consider the committee's report. It was at this juncture that the influence of the lieutenant governor and the speaker proved critical to the program.

"When the SCOPE report came out, and there was stuff in there we couldn't agree with, the governor called a special session, which was his commitment to us and to a lot of other people. He kept his commitment and called a special session." [Teachers' Union Official]

"The other important fact was this was not done during a regular legislative session. The governor called a special session to deal only with the items on his agenda: education, highways, taxation. They had 30 days in which to do nothing but concentrate on those issues. In a regular session we would have competed with every other issue, and we would not have gotten their attention. This point is often overlooked. When this governor came in, he proposed changes during a regular session, and they did not pass them. We did not rush anything through in 30 days, though. This was a one-year-and-three-months project that culminated in a 30-day session." [Governor's Office]

"The bill was 225 pages long. There are things in it that people are still finding. This was a nightmare for the Legislative Council, which is responsible for bill drafting and the code." [Legislature]

"Perot had his lobbyists working out of the lieutenant governor's and speaker's offices. He had the power structure right there. He hired four of the best lobbyists in the United States, in Texas." [School Board Member]

"He hired every lobbyist in the state who knew anything about it or had any influence. A lot of them were people who would be working against him if he had not hired them. He kept them in reserve. So he had all of the power lobby from the business community personally working for him. He tied them all up. He also had a computer operation running with all of the campaign contributors to every legislator on computer. If they needed something, they could get their people to call these contributors and have them call their legislators. They did this across the board." [Teachers' Union Representative]

"We had people on both sides of the issue as it went through. We worked during the session to try to preserve some of the earlier formulas and then to try to reduce the financial impact on districts by trying to promote more funding in the basic allotment. We felt there were many elements of the legislation that were needed, and that great change was going to take place. If anything, we tried to get them to phase some of these things in over time rather than have immediate implementation of so much." [School Administrator]

"We thought the Legislature would not go with the full report, because there were just too many things in it: the appointed board, all of this personnel stuff, and the money. We thought we would have the capability in the Senate to mold something we could live with. But Perot was just too effective with his lobby. The die was cast before the session started." [Teachers' Union Official]

"The House had tried to do something else. The Education Committee [in the House] ran in a different direction, over the objection of the speaker, and came out with a totally different package than SCOPE wanted. They [the House committee] decided to keep the elected board; they rejected some of the formula changes; they worked until about one a.m. Sunday morning. The speaker showed up in committee about 10 p.m. the night before and sat in the front row while this committee cut up his program. He said he was real unhappy. The [House] committee put its report together after a couple of weeks — all of this paperwork is [now] done, and they are ready to bring it to the floor. When it came up, the speaker said he would support some amendments; this is after it has been through this big blood bath in committee. The speaker's main man on the floor moved to substitute a 300-page bill no one had seen before. It carried. The speaker had previously worked every single member of the House personally in his office, one by one. This was not arm twisting; this was arm-breaking. They substituted the whole bill. The motion passed." [Education Lobbyist]

"They were voting on it item by item. One of the first was an appointed state board. The floor vote was in support of the elected board — a defeat for the speaker! No one had even thought about an appointed board before [sic], and Perot had only put it in in the last two weeks of SCOPE. They defeated it 80 to 60-some. This was a big victory for the common man! Two days later it was up for reconsideration. The speaker had worked all of the folks. It passed 84 to 46. Two days later! When we saw that happen, we said, 'Better stay out of the way, forget it!' " [Teachers' Union Official]

"It was a good fight, but we were playing in the big time. The writers wrote it up and said they had not seen anything like this happen in 30 years

— [for someone to] pull everyone together and completely rewrite everything that had been done in one special session, an education law they had been tinkering with for 50 years." [Education Lobbyist]

"Perot by himself would not have been enough. But when tied with the others, the lieutenant governor, the speaker, the governor, really, you had a package, both a product and a package of elements working for it. It brought the entire momentum of the state to bear on the passage of a significant piece of legislation. You don't expect Ross Perot and the business interests to stand up and call for the investment of more money, but that's exactly what happened." [Governor's Office]

"Perot promised that when he got the bill the way he wanted it, he would go to the taxpayers and the Chamber of Commerce to support it, to support a tax increase." [School Board Member]

"The success was due to the personal involvement of Ross Perot and the involvement of the people associated with him, and the broad base of support for the reforms among the political leadership, the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker, and comptroller. There was a broad range of personal commitment on the part of each of these people. All but Perot are Democrats." [School Board Member]

"The biggest mistake educators make is that they insist on living in that best of all worlds. There is no such world. Educational decision-making is political decision-making, because the people who govern public education are elected to office, whether to a local board or the Legislature. You must use their processes to accomplish your goals." [Governor's Office]

"In one educational session the state committed $3 billion to education. The governor pressed for increased taxes, after saying he would not do so in the campaign. In the end, he chose the school children. I don't think it could have been done any other way. In time, HB 72 will be looked upon with the same respect afforded the reforms of 1949." [Governor's Office]

"We now feel, let's get on with it, get it done! It's going to be good for all of us." [Department of Education Official]

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And so the tales of how it happened come to an end. At this point, at least four features of the reform processes are evident. The first pertains to the contributions of the committed leaders: sometimes a governor, sometimes a superintendent, sometimes a legislator, sometimes a private citizen. The second applies to the fact that as important as these key leaders were, none *could do it alone, and a large part of their success resides in their ability to form or participate in the essential coalition. The third relates to the presence of blind luck, which sometimes proved crucial (although an ability to quickly capitalize on a fortunate circumstance also was a factor, and this, too, may be an important aspect of effective leadership). Fourth, notwithstanding opinions to the contrary, it is abundantly clear that these political processes were informed, and the greatest source of information was the formal educational establishment. If educators felt they were shut out of the process it probably was because priorities other than their own obtained. Thus, in the end it may be the ascendence of political over educational priorities that explains impressions of the prevalence of top-down or bottom-up processes. But that probably says more about the future of the reforms than most realize: they may not have a great deal of professional support (although they have more than usually realized), but they have popular support, and this makes them politically congruent. And that augurs well.*

The subject now turns to what it was that was accomplished, and descriptions of that comprise the essence of the following section, as the narrative style returns to the more conventional mode.

THREE

The Education Programs of the States

"And how many hours a day did you do lessons?" said Alice, in a hurry to change the subject.

"Ten hours the first day," said the Mock Turtle, "nine the next, and so on."

"What a curious plan!" exclaimed Alice.

"That's the reason they're called lessons," the Gryphon remarked: "Because they lessen from day to day."

This was quite a new idea to Alice, and she thought it over a little before she made her next remark. "Then the eleventh day must have been a holiday?"

"Of course it was," said the Mock Turtle.

Lewis Carroll Alice in Wonderland

In most of the states the education reform programs were accomplished via omnibus legislation. Popular references to individual state educational programs reflect that: "SB 813" in California, the "RAISE" and "PRIME" Bills in Florida, "SB 730" in Illinois, "HB 72" in Texas, and the "Education Improvement Act" in South Carolina. All are synonyms for the reform programs in those states. Colorado's "Educational Quality Act of 1985," (the '2 + 2 Project') and Washington's "Educational Excellence Program of 1984" and "Educational Excellence Act of 1985" perhaps euphemistically reveal similar proclivities in those states, although the programs themselves may be less audacious than those enacted in some other states.

As also was the case with the national studies, Student Achievement and the Education Professions were the two persistent themes of the state programs.[1] Other aspects, e.g., School Effectiveness, Governance and

Finance, also were present but usually in ancillary relationships to these two.

Such commonalities of theme may exemplify the circular logic that typically underlies the identification of policy alternatives throughout the nation, and which usually leads to a rather limited list of options. This also may be related, in turn, to the limited range of independent research resources available to the states. A former staff member of a state select committee put it this way, "We do a lot of skimming in effecting public policy. We don't always know what we're doing or how to get there, but it helps if we know that others have the same problem. We know we have to come up with something, so the standard approach is to call the Education Commission of the States [ECS] and ask what other states are doing."

A similar view was expressed by a Florida legislative staff member: "ECS collects and organizes this stuff into categories, and this is very helpful, very important, but that too influences policy, since the categories themselves really outline and limit the alternatives." All of this is evident in the reform packages. Competency standards, graduation requirements, testing, time on task, attendance, early childhood education, and reduced class sizes, among others, represent the general range of strategies in the Student Achievement category. Salary increases, differentiated salary systems, evaluation, and pre- and in-service education, among a few others, represent the approaches to the Education Professions. Generally, the states encountered more difficulty in the enactment, and especially the implementation, of programs in the second category (career ladders, merit pay, teacher testing and evaluation) than they did with the first, largely because of costs and resistance among education professionals.

In its February 6, 1986 issue, *Education Week* published a summary of the state programs as they stood early that year (organized on the following table into the categories employed in this report). While the present emphasis is on the seven subject states, the reform activities were much more widespread:

MAJOR STATE INITIATIVES

Number of State Activities
February, 1985

	Action	Under Consideration	Rejected
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT			
Graduation Requirements	43	5	1
Increased College Admission Requirements	17	3	
Statewide Assessment Tests	37	6	
Promotional Tests	8	3	
Exit Test	15	4	
Class Size Reduction	13	7	2
Additional Instruction Time	13	7	3
No Pass/No Play	6	4	2
Mandatory Kindergarten	5	2	7
Preschool Opportunities	7	8	2
THE PROFESSIONS			
Salary Increase/New Minimum	18	17	2
Career Ladder/Merit Pay	14	24	1
Certification Changes	28	16	1
Teacher Tests	29	10	1
Revised E-School Requirements	19	10	
Teacher Loans, Aid	24	13	2

Graduation requirements and statewide assessment tests were the more popular student achievement changes; teacher tests and changes in certification requirements were the most numerous of the changes involving the professions.

Another category not displayed on the table is Finance and Governance. Some 16 states, including Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas, increased or established new taxes to provide funding for education renewal. A much smaller number of states altered their governance structure, usually by changing the elective or appointive status of the members of the state board of education, the superintendent, or both.

The programs of the seven subject states are reviewed in the following paragraphs. The details should not be considered exhaustive, but they are reasonably descriptive.[2]

Student Achievement

It is likely we will get some improvement because we have tremendous under-achievement in the schools. Whether or not this will reach students who have a history of poor performance is something else. This is something the critics were concerned about from the beginning.

U.S. Department of Education Staff Member

Porsche is a two-syllable word.

Anonymous

Educational Goals:

Notwithstanding concerns for overextended schools in the national literature — e.g., Michael Kirst's position that either school functions must be reduced or schools must be given more time and money to accomplish them — the states either avoided or moved quickly past the issue of purpose, perhaps because frontal assaults on goals usually result more in semantic pablum than clarified visions or manageable priorities. Only rarely are public organizations able to directly reduce or purge their goal structures. Education is the least likely area to search for exceptions. Essentially, all of the variegated purposes of education remain at least ostensibly in place in the states. The struggles in Illinois over the physical education and driver education mandates, which ironically provided the catalyst for the reform movement there, did not result in a decision to reduce them; physical education requirements were changed to options. The lengthy and heated public meetings over vocational education in Washington's secondary schools did not lead to change. The various functions of education identified by Michael Kirst and others, and described earlier in this report, continue to aptly describe the public educational system today.

While there was some statutory goal-setting, the tempo of that movement was glacial, and, to the extent there was change, it was the product of purgation through displacement, largely as increased academic requirements threatened to force other subjects from the curriculum (in some very minor way obverting the experience of the academic curriculum during the excitement of the Progressive Education Era).

The authors of *The Shopping Mall High School* (cited *supra*) describe the de facto goals of the public secondary schools as student retention and completion (high statistics on either of which contribute to an aura of effectiveness, even though they measure form rather than substance). To these ends, the school offers an impressive variety of courses and program tracks, leaving responsibility for choices with the student, and explaining why some students seem to get through school without receiving an education.[3]

The process of "academicizing"[4] the curriculum may also involve a process leading to a limited reduction in this variety, and perhaps some indirect alteration in school goals is underway. In the words of a California university professor,

> We've seen over a 20 percent increase in math and science and a decrease in voc-ed and driver-ed; so the reform movement is adding so many requirements that it is driving out these other things. It is definitely narrowing the functions of education. Foreign language and advanced placement are way up. While the schools are not being directly relieved of the other things, the range of courses students are taking is being narrowed, and the comprehensive high school's curriculum is being shrunken accordingly.

Similarly, from a staff member in the Colorado Department of Education, "Increased admission requirements by Colorado universities are having a negative effect on our vocational education programs. There is only so much time available."

There are exceptions to this view, even among educators in vocational education. In the words of a South Carolina voc-ed official:

> I think one of the most significant things about our state reform effort was that vocational education was involved from the very

> beginning. Of course, many vocational people were at first convinced that the additional graduation requirements, the additional remediation requirements, would abolish vocational education at the secondary level. That has not been the case because we made some up-front adjustments and provided local districts with more flexibility. Vocational educators had been too rigid with their scheduling at the secondary level, saying that, 'across the board you've got to provide a three-hour block to teach anything in vocational education.' We've moved away from that in this state by providing districts with the option of deciding whether it's going to be a one-, two-, or three-hour course, or what have you, for one, two, or three years. This has helped a great deal in continuing to provide the opportunities for students to enroll in vocational courses along with the increased academic requirements.

It may be drifting from the subject, but undisguised pleasure over vocational education in the high schools is not universal in South Carolina. In the words of a legislative staff member there:

> I think probably a small neutron bomb will solve that [vocational education] issue. We have lots of vocational education buildings in South Carolina. Surely we can do something creative with those buildings. You drive past them and, you wonder, you know, what goes on? I still go home on holidays and bitch at my parents about what they've done.

In a few cases the states approached the issue of purposes more directly, in the legislation itself. In Illinois, HB 730 attempts to establish direction by defining the purposes of education as the "transmission of knowledge and culture through which children learn in areas necessary to their continuing development."[5] These necessary areas are language arts, math, sciences (biological, physical, and social), the fine arts, and physical development and health. The State Board of Education is charged with responsibility for establishing goals that will be consistent with these purposes and defining the competencies students will be expected to master along the way. Districts are obliged to establish learning objectives consistent with the statutory purposes and which meet or exceed the state board's competency goals.

This legislative response is reminiscent of the definition of educational purposes in Washington's 1977 Basic Education Act [described *supra*], wherein the state's goal of a basic education for all children also is defined in terms of general competencies. Subsequent Washington legislation speaks to the development of model curricula in core areas (three each year) as links to classroom offerings.

Both programs place a lot of faith in competency standards as the connections between state and local goals. This also was moderately common across the country, reflective of a desire to be more specific about what is to be learned. The "ability to read and write at specified levels of difficulty" is a competency goal that can be tested. It contrasts with "completion of two years of high school English," which is a "seat-time" standard, and which, since it might include anything from drama to typing, does not readily lend itself to testing.

Competency Standards:

Competency statements, essentially descriptions of what students are expected to know after they complete a course or program, proved to be one of the more novel aspects of a reform movement that was characterized by a limited innovative range. Competency statements can serve dual purposes, providing linkages among state goals, district objectives, school courses, and testing [assessment] programs, as mentioned above, or as statements of expectations to teachers and students, encouraging curriculum design and integration.

Such standards, thus, are part of a debate over the most effective manner in which to define high school graduation requirements. In most states the legislatures have insisted on expressed numbers of years of math, science, English "seat-time requirements," while (at least some) educators have pressed for competency standards, "outcome statements," model curricula, or "statements of competency expectations" (normally prepared by university faculty for students considering college attendance).

This has caused some tension. Whatever their many virtues, such statements do not lend themselves to the statutory form, and they usually require considerable thought, discussion, and time in their development. Although the ultimate result might be better than seat-time standards in terms of greater ease of measuring whether learning goals are actually achieved, they also may frustrate accountability-oriented legislators seeking something manageable to mandate. The Illinois experience provides an example, as a member of the legislative staff argued:

> The new things are those outcome statements, which I think are just bullshit. I don't know what they mean. I don't think anyone

> does. At least with seat time you have some guarantee the person was there! I'm ignoring them and hoping they'll go away. They're just gobbledygook. How do you prove that someone is familiar with the fine points of Renaissance art? These outcome statements make me swallow hard. They're just words.

The issue of competencies versus seat-time was promoted onto the national scene by the College Board's report, *Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and be Able to Do.*[6] Educators in some states, however, led the way. According to an Illinois' Department of Education official, "We chose to use a phrase that the state should move away from prescribing what kids should do in school to prescribing what they should know and be able to do as a consequence of school, The College Board, three months later, came out with its report. The president of the board [named] was a former Illinois board member who knew about the work here and asked for permission to use it."

Uncertainties are not necessarily restricted to the legislature. According to an Illinois Department of Education official, "I think a lot of people feel this notion makes sense. I think fewer of them are as worried as I was then and now about whether or not it can be implemented practically. This is the new challenge. It will be interesting to see if it works, if we can do it."

Actually, although not particularly by design, Illinois covered all its bases by also imposing seat time requirements. With respect to that subject, a State Board of Education staff member suggested:

> As a consequence [from the 'mandates studies'] of noting that our laws did not talk about what is important, and what they did talk about was seat-time, a subject much less central to the student's education, leaving only inferences about what should be required, we concluded our whole approach was wrong. At that point we decided we should develop some sort of definition of schooling in Illinois. It would have two phases: establishment of state learning outcomes, and removal of the course requirements. About this time, the *Nation at Risk* report came out, and it caught the imagination of some folks. Their response was to adopt graduation requirements, which was moving from the direction we wanted to go.

Competency statements are being employed in vocational education in Colorado. "We try to operate solely on a competency-based curriculum. Rather than re-invent the wheel, we depended heavily upon the series of

Illinois studies. Some districts have accepted them or are redesigning their courses to include those criteria." [Staff Member, Colorado State Office of Occupational Education]

Under Florida's RAISE bill, the state also is required to specify minimum student performance standards for all grades (to be tested at grades three, five, eight, and 11) and districts are required to adopt district performance standards for required courses that augment them. The term, "curricular frameworks" appears (as part of the Appropriations Act), as the state department is obliged to describe broad guidelines to ensure a higher degree of consistency in course content and instruction among the districts.

Several states in addition to Illinois employ both seat-time requirements and competency statements. In California, for example, legislation specifies graduation requirements while requiring the State Department of Education to develop model curriculum standards related to them. Local boards are obliged to compare their requirements with the model standards at least each three years.

California has two further approaches afoot: the Intersegmental Academic Senates Statements of Competency Expectations, presently in English and math, with science and foreign languages under development, and the Department of Education's Model Curriculum Standards for the high school grades. Some tension between the two sectors has occurred as people in the high schools attack college faculty for their failure to involve representatives of the high school (probably an overstated charge), and the faculty insist they were not consulted in the development of the model curricula (probably an equally overstated charge). This arena offers an excellent opportunity for the sectors to interact cooperatively, but so far no one seems to have seized it.

The business of cooperative effort is important in other ways. Competency statements provide the links between goals, curricula, and tests. As the theoretical means to the achievement of schooling goals, their development and content should not be left entirely to the educational community. If education moves forthrightly in this direction, the competency statements will become the school's instructional goals. Public participation in their development should be as important as it is in any other major education purpose-setting endeavor.

High School Graduation Requirements:

There are strong fears of a national curriculum, and this calls up the local-control flag. In fact, we do have a national curriculum, the same studies, the same books. You see this in the new graduation requirements. We should drop this straw man.
Director of a national education profession association

Virtually all of the states establishing graduation requirements elected to do so through the specification of seat-time requirements. Generally, the debates centered on the number of years required in each subject rather than on which subjects would be included, lending substance to a suspicion that something approaching a national consensus on the content of a high school program, and thereby a national curriculum, has emerged. The national reports consistently addressed graduation requirements [See Appendix]. The significant point for this report is that the legislation applies the requirements to virtually all students, allowing exceptions only for special students, and indirectly calling into question the continued existence of an infinite variety of curricular tracks.

California reinstated statewide high school graduation requirements after an almost 20 year absence. Effective June, 1987, they will involve three years each of English and social studies, two years each of mathematics and science, one year of art or foreign languages, and two years of physical education.

In the arena of school reform one often discovers less there than meets the eye. Thus, it no longer comes as a surprise to learn that many districts already exceeded the standards at the time of their establishment. It was because of this that the State Board of Education, with the new superintendent, recommended more stringent requirements, one additional year each of English, mathematics, and foreign language, along with one-half year of computer science beyond those outlined above. But legislative anxieties over an increased student dropout rate proved compelling, and the less stringent changes were adopted. Even so, indications are that by the time the statutory requirements are in effect, 90 percent of the districts will be ready to meet them, and 73 percent will exceed them by meeting the stronger state board requirements. In fact, all of the districts surveyed in 1983 year by the California Tax Foundation indicated that they already had adopted standards that would meet or exceed those contained in SB 813.[7]

A similar condition operated in Washington, where, in 1983, the State Board of Education adopted high school graduation requirements that also were lower than those generally in existence throughout the state and less than those subsequently recommended by the study committee. They consisted of three years of English, two years each of math and science, two and one-half years of social studies, and one year of physical education. The legislative compromise between the state board (which wished to set standards by rule) and the study committee (which sought higher standards placed in statute) positions was to place the lower board standards in statute, a Solomonic solution that made real the worst fears of both parties.

In Colorado, decisions on high school graduation requirements are constitutionally a matter of local control. The Governor's Task Force for Excellence in Education recommended increased requirements in terms of competencies, and by early 1985, several Colorado universities increased their admission requirements, inducing more than 60 percent of the districts to increase their graduation standards.[8]

In Florida, the RAISE legislation increased graduation requirements so that by 1986-87, students would be required to complete four years of English, three years each of math and science, and one each in American and world history. One-half year each is required in economics, American government, arts, vocational education, "life management skills," and physical education. For college-bound seniors, an additional two years of foreign languages is required. The action prompted one parent to express concern over the prospect of leveling downward, perhaps an unexpected effect of such requirements: "From my standpoint, I think my two kids got a better education because they went through before some of these reforms than they did afterwards, because they're highly motivated kids who took the hardest classes, and they had a chance to take classes that they wouldn't otherwise have had, because they would have been frozen into the new requirements. There's just not enough time."

Although the Omnibus Bill in Illinois was passed in the summer of 1985, in an earlier [1983] enactment, the Legislature established graduation requirements consisting of three years of English, two each of mathematics and social studies, one of science, and one of foreign languages, arts, or vocational education, and four of physical education. This was not really what the Department of Education wanted, as, in the words of a member of the staff, "A lot of the state board work on the mandates caught the eye of legislators, a lot of whom had never looked at what the law said until it was laid down for them. Ironically, their response was to adopt graduation requirements, while all of our work was leading us in the direction of outcomes statements. It seemed as though they were only paying attention to the parts that most interested them."

South Carolina's new requirements for graduation added two units to the total number required for graduation (from 18 to 20), with the state board given responsibility for defining specifics. The statute requires a minimum of three units in mathematics and two in science. Provision also is made for a graduation test.

In Texas, based on 1981 legislation, the State Board of Education in 1984 approved graduation requirements consisting of four years of English, two and one-half years of social studies, three of mathematics, two of science, one and one-half of physical education, and one-half each of health and economics. An advanced high school program requires an additional unit of science, two units of foreign language, and one unit each of fine arts and computer science. An agency staff member notes, "This is one example of what preceded HB 72. We also had in 1981 the requirements for those entering and exiting teacher education. Minimum skills testing came in 1979. When Perot's select committee reviewed these things, they said they had already been taken care of. So HB 72 had nothing on them."

Perhaps, if nothing else, the presence of graduation requirements will settle perennial arguments over which educational sector should make the decision on what high school students should study. For years curricular debates between the colleges and the common schools have centered on which was responsible for the drift in standards. The colleges and universities pointed to the high schools, insisting that the responsibility lay there. The high school people argued that college admissions requirements send the clearest and most compelling message to most students.

With their packages of high school graduation requirements, secondary and postsecondary competency standards, and college admissions requirements, the states may have overreacted, but at least the subject of which sector is responsible may be settled for a while.

College Admission Requirements:

As with high school graduation requirements, more rigorous college admissions standards were a popular change. Unlike K-12 changes specifically, however, the legislatures were chary of mandating college admission requirements through statute. Where legislative action occurred, as in Washington, it was in the form of a directive to the institutions to join in the identification of minimum entrance standards. This responsibility has since been assigned to the new Higher Education Coordinating Board. The point is that school reform tended to be perceived as a K-12 issue; this and the normal extension of operating autonomy allowed the institutions of higher learning diverted legislative incursions from that realm. Thus, when such changes occurred, they tended to do so at the institution or state board initiative.

By early 1985, revised college admissions requirements had been established in 17 states and were under consideration in three others. Several of the seven study states were included. In all cases, the references were to seat-time requirements. In several Washington institutions, the governing boards established requirements similar to those that had been recommended by the select committee. In Texas, where there is no statewide board with responsibility for establishing admissions requirements, at least 10 public institutions increased their own. The effects of increases in Colorado were mentioned previously.

For the most part, the expanded or more clearly articulated admissions requirements incorporated the high school graduation standards, perhaps adding a requirement for foreign language study or an additional year of science or mathematics. In Illinois, entrance requirements and state board competency standards are viewed as intentionally complementary, covering both ends of the spectrum (perhaps with a modest amount of redundancy, in view of the equally present statutory high school graduation requirements).

Also in Illinois, admissions requirements were established for students entering the community college academic transfer program, and similar action was under consideration in California.

This is a tough one to call. Standards in community college transfer programs are under attack in many states. This is not unusual, since faculty in baccalaureate programs tend to believe that if they cannot influence the quality of the lower division community college programs, the quality of their own upper division component will be adversely affected by ill-prepared transfer students (although rigorous grading policies in the universities used to be one way of coping with this problem). The establishment of admissions standards for community college academic transfer programs, however, not only marks a major departure from tradition, it also reduces the size of the educational safety net at the very time the societal need for community colleges as alternative academic education is greatest. The dropout issue is an important centrifugal force, threatening the future of the high school standards that have been adopted. If the community college escape route is closed through requirements for admission that cannot be met by students who have not completed high school, the reform process may have gone too far.

Testing:

Testing programs comprise the fourth major element of the changes listed under the rubric of student achievement. In time, testing requirements may prove to be most significant of all of the state-mandated reforms. It was evidence of decreasing test scores, particularly declining college admissions test scores signalizing failure in the elite academic programs of the secondary schools, that galvanized the nation and set the reform movement of the 1980s in motion.

Requirements for testing in elementary through high school grades have by now been imposed in most of the states. There remains some confusion over purpose, however, with some advocates pressing for their use for accountability purposes (to show how well the schools are doing). Others are insisting that they should be coupled to remediation and tutorial programs and used mainly to measure individual student achievement and for diagnostic purposes. Sample versus universal testing programs (periodically testing a few students or regularly testing all students), and student-specific feedback information (whether to aggregate test data or report scores for each student separately) are parts of this, as is the level of difficulty (where to place the passing score) and what the tests should test (see the discussion of competency statements, supra). The issue of cultural bias also remains, although it does not appear as strong as was once the case.

In view of the present interest in effectiveness and accountability, it should not be surprising that so much emphasis in the school improvement program was placed on testing. Virtually all of the states examined were deeply involved. Florida, which first made passage of a literacy test for high school graduation mandatory in 1971 (when assessment tests in grades three, five, nine, and 11 were established, and passage of the third grade test was made a requirement for promotion), directed a review of the tests to determine whether the level of difficulty should be increased as part of its current school improvement program. The review also would focus on what might be the desirability of administering the tests at the end of the school year and using them as a condition for promotion.

South Carolina established an exit examination for graduation and provisions for remediation if students fail. If a student leaves the system without passing the examination, the diploma will indicate the number of years in school and the credits earned. The South Carolina program also requires the State Board of Education to determine the criteria for student promotion, including promotional testing.

Texas' HB 72 requires students to take achievement tests every two years, and passage of an exit test is required for graduation. Minimum basic skill competency tests in reading, writing, and math are to be given at the first-, third-, fifth-, seventh-, and ninth-grade levels. At the 12th-grade level, tests are limited to math and English. Students must be allowed multiple opportunities to pass the 12th-grade test. Remediation services must be provided to students who do not perform satisfactorily. No student may be exempted from taking a final examination in a class in which other students are so required. The Texas Act also specifies that students whose grades are below 70 may be required to attend tutorials at least twice per week during the succeeding grade reporting period.

In Washington, the state extended its assessment program to include the eighth and 10th grades. An exit test was rejected, although the state superintendent was directed to study the feasibility of a "Life Skills" version of such a test and to report back to the Legislature with recommendations.

As with Washington, California extended its assessment tests to the eighth and 10th grades, with requirements that they encompass science, history, reading, and mathematics. An optional "Golden States" achievement test was established for students wanting to earn honors. Illinois' SB 730 requires third-, sixth-, eighth-, and tenth-grade assessment tests, which must cover (progressively by academic year) reading, mathematics, and language arts. The Legislature, while not specifically proscribing social promotions, indicated that as a matter of public policy it was opposed to them. The Illinois program also provides for remediation services for students not performing well on the tests.

Opinions vary, but almost everyone has something to say about testing. In fact, the subject arose with greater frequency than any other during the field interviews. In Colorado, a Department of Education staff member spoke with much feeling on the subject: "There are some of us who are absolutely committed to demonstrating objectively what is taking place — we've had to fight through a lot of local district concerns about district comparisons. They think someone is going to make some sort of magic list of School District A as the best, and School District B as the worst. That's really not our intention at all. We're trying to help the districts make better use of the test data they get, so it doesn't become just a drill for them."

Others feel as strongly. "The test scores can keep things alive, if we can use them to show that the reforms are biting, that they're hitting, even with only a sample of schools." [California University Professor]

"If nothing else, the tests will show us whether kids can read and write, and that should help the literacy thing. If they can't read, they can't take a test, and you find that out then, before it's too late. You just have to make sure that all of them are tested and that something is done with the results when they come in." [Washington Legislator]

"Once the states start collecting information on student achievement, that will give them the kind of feedback we get — we've been testing here in Florida for 10 years — to make the adjustments, make the changes." [Florida Department of Education Staff Member]

"The State Board of Education set our goal as the top 25 percent [the top national quartile], and tests scores are a big part of that. The problem is, all of us [in the different states] will have to use the same kinds of tests." [Florida Department of Education Staff Member]

"Competency testing, I would say, was really the beginning of the reform movement." [Texas Legislator]

"When you open the Pandora's box of testing, you're not sure where it's going to take you [sic]. It helped the implementation of all these major changes because we had a data base we would not have had were it not for the mandated testing. In fact, we changed the board policy on the release of test data, after a couple of years of holding it at the state level until the district superintendents had had a chance to see it. What happened was that the day before the board was going to get it, there would be a letter on [the state superintendent's] desk from a newspaper requesting it under the Freedom of Information Act, in whatever format they wanted it. So it was going to hit the papers in any case. We just decided we would announce and release it on the same day, as a matter of public interest as much as anything. We're test-oriented in this society, not performance-oriented." [South Carolina Department of Education Official]

A Texas Teacher's Union official expressed some uncertainties about testing in this manner. "The thing I'm afraid of is that they are going to go totally to standardized testing as the only measure of what goes on, which means everyone will stop doing creative things and start teaching to the test." He continued, "They are now testing in almost every grade level, which they were not before. And it's clearly the agenda of [named in interview], who is Perot's guy on the state board . . . to measure teacher performance by student test scores. We will fight that to our death."

And, from Florida, "I concluded in my mind [sic] that the best way to effect change in education for the better is to seek to measure and recognize what it is you want education to do. And, when you measure and recognize it, then the people who are responsible for directly operating the store will figure out the smartest way to get there [sic] in order to get that recognition and attention. You don't have to tell them exactly how to do that. I'm talking about testing programs — it is true they will have enormous influence in terms of what is taught; if you don't test anything — I will clue you in — they won't teach much." [Department of Education Official]

On the subject of cultural bias, "Minorities believe that education will break the cycle of poverty. They [parents] feel deeply about their kids' education, but they feel inadequate in the school environment because they probably dropped out of school themselves. They don't know how to interpret test scores. The big split is still within the do-good community, some of whom are very anti-testing because they feel tests work against minority kids. But that view is really passe'. Cultural bias is pretty much gone, as long as you actually teach the material that the tests cover. Now we seem to be killing the messenger." [Washington, D.C. Social Program Consultant]

Questions about the appropriate degree of test difficulty may become a public issue if Texas is an example. The first major disagreement between the Legislative Education Board (LEB), the oversight committee created by HB 72, and the appointed State Board of Education arose over this subject. It aroused strong feelings:

> The first mandatory exit exam for students was given in November [1985]. There was lots of criticism in the press, which was saying that the test was easier than it should be. Basically, you had the LEB going after the state board over the rigor of the test. We are under a court precedent, a Florida case, saying that the test must measure what is taught. We could not do that here because we had just instituted a new curriculum the same term. [The courses were not yet in place.] Over and over at the LEB meeting the members were saying, 'mediocrity was addressed in HB 72 and the state board was there to see that it did not happen again. They expected more.' I felt sorry for the board. [Legislative Staff Member]

A member of the Texas Education Agency staff pointed to some of the difficulties:

> We have a graduation test, which we just gave for the first time to our 11th graders. They have four chances [during the year] to pass it. That test will have a lot of emphasis, especially in determining whether they have skills. We had a 91 percent passage rate the first time it was given. But we were criticized by some of the legislators, who believed that the failure rate should be higher, that the scores were set too low. If we dropped our cut score, you would have a much higher minority failure rate. With the score set where it was, 85 percent of the minority students passed the test. But if we had done that [what the LEB was calling for], only 63 percent would have passed. The Board set these standards for the first time and in two years we will raise them again. This is only fair, since the new curriculum went into effect this fall, and many kids were tested on things they had not been taught.

A Washington eighth grade test administered in 1983 calls into question aggregate versus individualized reporting and reveals a not widely recognized tension between assessment and diagnosis. The subject involves a statewide reading test that was incorporated into the 1983 general testing program (which is administered in the Spring, as the school year is ending). The results on the reading test were not encouraging, as the mean score for the state's eighth graders was 13 points below that required to read the front page of the Seattle *Times* unassisted. In response to a subsequent inquiry into corrective measures, the education department spokesman reported that the test scores were aggregated, since the number of students scoring in the lowest quartile is used to determine a district's eligibility for remediation funds, but there was no way to identify individual scores or advise parents or teachers of individual student needs. Many of these students entered high schools with no general remediation programs the following fall. They will graduate in Spring 1987.

In spite of remaining philosophical and technical problems, with the advent of widespread testing requirements, states have set forces for sustained improvement in motion. Annual published scores on test results become annual reminders. If they attain their promise, the likelihood of illiterate high school students should be reduced, as prospects of identifying them early improve.

Much depends on the test, and on the associated services, since students with reading and other problems must be identified, their particular problems diagnosed, and then referred to appropriate corrective services.

But testing programs appear to have a potential to contribute to lasting educational improvement.

Longer School Day/Year:

Several of the states added time to the school year, but most shied away from this remedy, finding the costs prohibitive (professional salaries account for most of the costs in education; those salaries are predicated on the nine-month academic year) and professional resistance heavy. In the words of an Illinois teacher:

> We'll get to improved teachers' salaries long before we get 11 month contracts. Teachers don't want them. Parents don't want them. Kids don't want them. Look what happened in North Carolina when they tried to do this. They threw the board members out. Summer is the time for young people to experiment with other kinds of activities. Who's going to trade that off?

And, from a Florida Teachers' Union Representative:

> We opposed the extended school year [proposal] in favor of an extended school day. We opposed the school year because we've tried it and tried it, and we've had all kinds of experiments in the last 20 years in this state for year-round schools, and every one has failed miserably. It's cost a lot of money and upset people. We've tried every innovation possible in this, and it just doesn't work. People just raise so much hell — they don't want it. They're so used to having that vacation in the summer, even though we're not an agricultural society anymore. Everything's geared around it. But we are for the extended school day within reason. We felt, and still feel, that if you must have greater, more education, then that's a good way to get it. We don't believe or buy into their propaganda about Japan and Europe, and all of that stuff, which we pointed out as often as we could — you know, the suicide rate in Japan — if that's what you want, then go for it! But those were the tactics that were used in the arguments.

The economic competition theme brought the time issue to the fore early. American schools operate on a 180 day year, more or less, a vestige of the nation's agricultural heritage. Japan's schools operate more than 220 days a year, creating a substantial difference over a 12-year span (about two years).

Skepticism over the benefits of more time prevailed in most states, as both citizens and legislators argued that ways must be found to use the existing time more effectively before adding more. Some suggest that this is a dodge, to avoid confronting the subject of a 10- or 11-month salary schedule for teachers. But, again, teachers also seem to find the idea of more time unappealing, notwithstanding larger paychecks. When asked why he left a successful career as a small businessman for a job in the public schools, an Illinois teacher replied, "Three reasons: 'June, July, and August.'" Another spoke fondly of felicitous summers on his boat, away from principals, parents, and pupils.

Still another reason for expanding at least the professional year is to allow more time for academic planning. This reason seems to carry more influence. In many cases it involves extended contracts for a limited number of senior or mentor teachers, sometimes as part of a career ladder program. More frequently it applies generally to a more limited period — a few minutes to an hour a day, or five days added to the year. In any case, the tentative nature of these experiments continues to testify to the depth of affection for the present system and the continuing appeal of a school-free summer. It also says something about the nature of true motives; such programs are often a device for finessing legislative opposition to more money for general teacher salary increases.

In California, under the provisions of SB 813, districts receive financial bonuses to increase the number of instructional minutes each day. By late 1985, all but 14 districts had elected to participate in the program. All of the participating districts increased their school years to 180 days, closing the gap between the amount of time California students had spent in school and the national average. The increased funding went almost in its entirety to teachers' salaries, although some districts used a portion of the funds to reinstate a sixth period.[9]

> Changes such as this are not widely regarded as significant pedagogical innovations: "There's a million things in 813, but the sum does not amount to anything. It's all symbolic. There's nothing to make a school better. The idea that sold the bill was trading reforms for more money. The sum of the bill does not amount to a hill of beans. Kids will go to school longer; we'll have increased graduation requirements, whatever it takes to ensure the *quid pro quos*. The money was essential, and if it

> took a few minutes more school time each day to get it, then that's what it took." [Staff member, California Department of Education]

Even so, costs remain an important consideration. In the words of a Florida legislator: "When you tie salaries to an extended school year, the costs become quite massive. For that reason we decided to go with an extended school day, and basically do it through a seven-period as opposed to a six-period day, which was much cheaper to implement than the extended school year. Perhaps more important, this gives more time to meet the graduation requirements. The salvation of vocational education in this state was when school districts went to the seven-period day, because this allowed a continuation."

Not everyone agrees that the program is working:

> One of the most controversial things we have gone to is a seven period day for the high school students, and some have gone to six 60-minute periods. They get extra money for doing that. The idea is based on the references to Japan and Russia and sort of the belief that the longer you are in school, the better it is. It isn't mandated — you can have the seven periods, or the six 60-minute periods, or, if you don't want the money, you can do whatever you want. This is probably the most controversial thing, because it is mandated [to qualify for the extra funding]. The whole thing is designed to get more money out into the system. In some districts kids were going to school for six 60-minute periods when the legislation passed. They added a seventh period, but that really made for a long day, so they've backed off to seven 50-minute periods, so their kids are actually going to school less than before [350 minutes rather than 360]. [Florida Department of Education Staff Member]

In Colorado, the Governor's Task Force concluded that the system should use the time presently available more effectively before considering an increase in the school day or year. This also was the position of the select committee studying education in Washington state, although this committee also encouraged establishment of a seven-period day to allow time for students to handle increased curricular options (the argument was rendered academic when the Legislature elected not to accept the committee's recommendations on graduation requirements). And it called for extension of the school year from 180 to 190 days to allow paid time for curricular planning and in-service instruction at the beginning and end of the student year. Neither study committee recommendation was implemented.

In Texas, HB72 came down on the side of controlling absences instead of lengthening the school year. The act also requires that time be set aside for teacher preparation at the beginning and end of each term. Florida imposed a seventh period of instruction for math and science instruction.

Finally, South Carolina's legislation specifies a minimum six-hour high school day, requires that first priority be given to teaching and learning tasks, and proscribes class interruptions except in emergencies. This state also increased the school year by five days, (to 190) for teacher planning and preparation.

Attendance/No Pass, No Play:

All three of the southern states examined in this report came down hard on attendance. Florida required seniors to attend school full time regardless of the number of credits they needed for graduation, and limited participation in extra-curricular activities to students who maintained at least a 1.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. Texas changes have become almost legendary, as students are to be denied credit for classes in which there are more than five unexcused absences per semester. Participation, including practice, in extra-curricular activities is denied to any student receiving a failing grade in an academic class. This has provoked a fair amount of resistance, perhaps more than any other academic change:

> There's a lot of attention given to one aspect of HB 72, 'No Pass/No Play.' This is a very small part. The full bill is about 240-pages long. [Texas Governor's Office staff member]

> People are making fools of themselves over this [No Pass/No Play] program. The coaches and the elementary principals are coming out against the governor over it, but public opinion surveys show support. The backlash will be against these people. They will defeat themselves. [Texas Education Lobbyist]

In South Carolina, students must have passed at least four academic courses, including each unit taken for graduation credit, in the preceding semester before they may participate in extra-curriculars. Three consecutive absences, a total of five unexcused absences, or 10 days absence will evoke a requirement of authoritative intervention (which presumably will engender a failing grade, under the provisions of The Education Improvement Act of 1984).

Class Size and The Early Years:

Consideration was given to reducing class size in some states, and this, it will be recalled, was a major concern behind the school reform movement in California. It is important to distinguish here between generalized systemic student-teacher ratios for budget purposes and actual class sizes. It is easy to speak of oranges and apples as efforts to improve funding allocations; budget formula ratios, are treated as efforts to reduce specific class sizes. For example, Washington State's Basic Education Act is formulated on the assumption of 50 certificated staff per 1,000 students, ostensibly converting to a 20:1 student-certificated staff ratio. In fact, the ratio is simply a device for distributing state funds to districts. It is only indirectly related, if at all, to actual class sizes. The reference is to certificated staff — not specifically to classroom teachers — and actual classroom ratios can and do depart substantially from the generalized figure. Efforts in that state to increase the ratio from 50 to 55 "certs," an increase to an average standard ratio of approximately 18:1, are nevertheless argued in the rhetoric of a case for reducing class sizes.

The difficulties with class-size adjustments lie in the very large reductions that must be made before changes begin to correlate with achievement ("If you reduce the ratio from 40 to 24 students in a class, you only gain about six points on the attainment scale." [Washington, D.C. Teacher]), and in the fact that student-teacher ratio adjustments are big ticket budget items. Moreover, in some (especially high school) classes, large ratios may be entirely appropriate. In others, English composition, for example, they can be enormously dysfunctional. This requires that the problem be approached incisively, with "targeted" adjustments directed to selective changes.

Finally, while there was widespread awareness of the exponential increases in teaching staff and classroom facilities necessary for improved achievement, there was less awareness of a better correlation with retention. In view of national concerns about the dropout rate, ranging from 25 percent upwards to 50 percent in some urban areas, class size reductions, especially in the middle years, might have been more thoughtfully considered.

In any case, these two factors (the marginal correlations with student achievement and the enormous staff and facility expense of even limited changes) combined to force political priorities to other subjects in most states. With the exception of Texas, and to a more limited extent, South Carolina and Florida, class-size improvements usually were set aside. In California, a class-size reduction proposal was vetoed by the Governor:

> We wanted some money for class size reduction, $400 million, but we could not get this in. We ended up with a bill that would have provided $20 million to begin to address a 20:1 ratio in higher-level English classes. This was the one the governor vetoed. He said he had gone along with all he could that year, and education would have to live within its means. [California Teachers' Union representative]

In Texas the ratio for funding was reduced from 25:1 to 20:1. This will not be manifest in general reductions, however, as class size limitations apply to kindergarten through second grade, which after 1985-86 may contain no more than 22 students. The program is to extend into the third and fourth grades in 1988-89. This represents one of the few significant instances of changes directed to elementary schools. It could have an important effect on student literacy in that system. Interestingly, in order to achieve this goal, planning must proceed on a much lower assumption:

> People started planning and wondering how many classrooms and teachers they would need. We found that you need to plan for 18:1, since that's how it works out; you have to plan for your overall attendance. If you have a 23rd child, you need another section. So if you have 50 kids, you need three sections. So, you need to think in terms of 18:1." [Texas Educational Consultant]

This helps to explain the high costs associated with such a change, but programs of differential reductions, focused adjustments, seem to make sense fiscally and educationally. Substantial reductions in class sizes during critical years or in critical areas hold more promise both in terms of feasibility and effectiveness than more incremental general reductions across an entire system. Reduced ratios in the early years would seem to permit the concentration of resources on the instillation of educational basics, just as reductions in writing classes permit more concerted attacks on functional illiteracy.

With respect to the other states, South Carolina instituted a maximum ratio of not more than 30:1 in math and science classes. Florida stressed English classes, whereby under the Writing Skills Enhancement Act, students in grades 10-12, required to produce at least one written assignment per week, may not number more than 100 per teacher, per day.

A few states included mandatory kindergarten or preschool programs among their educational improvement plans. Among the study states, South Carolina and Texas moved the most decisively in this direction. As part of HB 72, Texas districts are required to offer half-day pre-kindergarten classes if 15 eligible children reside in the district. To be eligible, a child must be at least four years old and unable to speak and comprehend English, or be from a family with an income below subsistence level.

South Carolina's Education Improvement Act requires kindergarten attendance for all five-year-olds, although parents may obtain a waiver. Child development, preschool, programs are available for four-year-olds with developmental disabilities. Washington prescribed preschool programs for the handicapped in 1984, and during the 1985 session, in response to select committee, Business Roundtable, and gubernatorial recommendations, established a pilot program for up to 5,000 economically disadvantaged students.

In Illinois, HB 90 authorizes grants for preschool programs, which must include a parent education component, for economically disadvantaged children ages three to five. Teachers must be certified in early childhood education to teach in the program. Full-day kindergarten programs also were authorized under the provisions of this bill. Early childhood education is a volatile subject for any number of political, educational, and social reasons, and considerable uncertainty is evident in the tentative initiatives apparent so far. The following comment from a California university professor speaks to some of the issues:

> Pressures are there for preschool and childcare, and custody issues before and after school. There is no question it is coming. This has political momentum. But this is childcare and not a schooling issue. It is driven by fundamental imperatives, and I see it competing with school. There is a fixed pot of money for youth, and the standard movement is in the form of substitution, from one group to another. The childcare measures are to help the parents out of their bind. It is still not a child-centered reform. Reform is to make the little buggers work harder so we can compete with the Japanese boogeyman. Early childhood

> education is a big expensive program. The only pay-offs have come from the Cadillac programs, like the Ypsilanti [Michigan] program. That's a really expensive program.

The reference to early childhood education as a social rather than an educational program is also reflected in the fact that the Washington pilot program mentioned above was assigned to the Department of Community Development instead of the state education department.

One final note on this subject: In at least one Denver school, "latch-key" programs for elementary students, representing a combination of childcare and educational services are a popular reality. The principal of an elementary school reported:

> I now have foreign language programs in this [elementary] school, but they are before- and after-school programs run completely by parents. And today, I have 150 kids out of my 600 enrollment in foreign language programs, beginning in the third grade. And these are completely run by a Mom. There are six different classes (German, French, Spanish) being offered to kids right now, and some are in their third year of language study. The children have to be here at eight a.m. and picked up at five p.m. The parents are responsible, and there is no busing. We also have a fantastic instrumental music program before school, a gymnastics program, creative movement, choral groups, and that sort of thing.

One suspects that adolescent illiteracy will not become a handicap for any of these children. The program also has something to say about the potential for volunteerism.

There are other parts of individual state reform programs involving student achievement, but those described here represent the most obvious and probably the most significant. For the second major component of their programs, the legislators turned to the education professions.

THE EDUCATION PROGRAMS OF THE STATES

The Education Professions

I have always had the impression that so long as change is defined as what can happen in a state legislature or a state board, it's never going to get at real reform.

Washington, D.C. Teacher

Teaching and the education professions comprise the second major component of most state programs. For the most part, the proposals involved the recruitment and retention of teachers and improving the qualifications of administrators, particularly principals; the preponderance of energy was devoted to salary and evaluation programs. Relatively little attention was directed to teacher preparation programs, and in most states the education colleges escaped unscathed — a pattern that may be changing. Even so, changes involving the professions tended to evoke more controversy in the field than the reforms applying to other matters, and this accounts for much of the conflict and resistance associated with the state initiatives. The considerable amount of publicity to the contrary, it also is in this area where the least real progress (with the possible exception of general salary increases) occurred.

Teacher salaries represent the bulk of the education budget, in some states ranging upwards to 80 to 90 percent of the total. In Washington, according to a member of the legislative staff, "A one-percent salary increase for teachers translates into a $50 million increase in the biennial education budget. A 10-percent increase, which is what the teachers want, amounts to $500 million, an increase equal to slightly more than 10 percent of the total."

In most states, salaries were an important part of the reform packages, and money for increases was a problem. It was soon apparent that taxes would have to be increased. Reformers presumed that tax increases would best succeed if they had business support; hence, education reform was couched in economic improvement terms, conveying an implicit invitation for business to join in. This prompted a Washington, D.C. teacher to remark, "People feel we must educate children for jobs, for economic development, not because of our responsibility to educate the next generation. Somewhere along the way we've lost sight of the child and of the value of education for its own sake."

For their part, business spokesmen displayed resistance to across-the-board salary increases, which some of the more outspoken (not necessarily always from the business sector) likened to "shoving money down a rat hole." More charitable participants suggested that across-the-board increases did not correlate very highly with improved classroom performance. The most frequent innovations, then, involved more rigorous evaluation programs and salaries keyed to performance. In the language of the 1980s, these meant merit pay systems and career ladder programs, neither of which evoked standing ovations at statewide assemblies of teachers.

Most present teacher salary systems key salary level to education and experience, with teachers on the schedule treated equally (i.e., so many years of experience and so many post-baccalaureate college credits qualifies all teachers possessing them for the same salary, regardless of what they teach, or how well they may teach it). Movement on the scale occurs as educational credits are earned through in-service education programs and years of experience on the job increase. In some cases a problem occurs as teachers reach the maximal experiential and educational juncture relatively early, as is the case in Washington, where they can "hit the flats" in about 14 years. Once teachers attain their maximal potential on the salary grid, subsequent salary increases can only come through general cost-of-living adjustments or legislative largess expressed in the form of across-the-board increases. Ability or merit, at this point, have virtually nothing to do with it.

Teachers' unions tend to support seniority-based systems, for reasons that are beyond the scope of this report. Opponents resist such plans because they do not recognize individual merit. Differentiated systems, presented as the alternative, are intended to recognize individual differences, while providing opportunities for promotion in a career field that presently allows only one — movement out of the classroom into the administrative ranks.

Uncertainties over the relationship between salaries and classroom improvements are widespread. Many legislators were able to accept a cost-of-living or comparative slippage argument for salary adjustments, as there was evidence of differentials throughout the country, particularly in the South, but they did not see increases as an education reform issue unless they could be related to certain other needs (e.g., increased starting salaries for beginning teachers or higher salaries for teachers in critical need — math, science, special education — areas), or used as levers to gain union support for other parts of the reform packages.

The issue quickly became politicized. That, however, is not particularly shocking; public employee salaries are invariably politicized. In the cosmopolitan terms of one California legislator, "As political wampum in the biennial exchanges of *quid pro quos,* [public employee] salary decisions always come last."

In some states, substantially increased funds for salaries eased some of the pain associated with other changes, e.g., evaluation requirements, presumably more facile termination arrangements, etc.

In California, "The promise of money was what neutralized the unions." [Department of Education staff member] And, "The unions felt they were giving up some things, such as longer days, for a pay raise. They saw goodies and calculated they could take care of the downside — dismissals, personnel things. They could water these things down through court suits and collective bargaining, and that is exactly what they've done." [California university professor] A Teachers' union official agrees, "In 1983 we started with the most massive infusion of money, over one billion dollars, and last year a billion again. It's allowed us to reinstate salaries, and that made teachers more receptive to other things."

Funding limitations always were a problem, undercutting even the more concerted efforts to achieve differentiated schedules through career ladders and merit pay programs. In Washington, the select committee's estimate of the costs associated with moving teachers onto its recommended career ladder program was $68 million.[10] When career ladder and merit pay programs were inaugurated in an underfunded manner, they exacerbated the tensions and contributed to the further antipathy of teachers toward the concept.

In the eyes of some teachers, legislatures sometimes gave with one hand while they took with the other. The interrelated nature of many of the legislative programs is exemplified by Texas' HB 72 which pursued one of the more comprehensive and complex approaches to reform in the professions. Teacher salaries were what prompted the whole thing in Texas in the first place. In the end, salaries were increased, and a new base minimum ($15,000) was set. The act, HB 72, also created a career ladder program with associated provisions for performance appraisals. The legislation established competency examinations for new teachers and new administrators. All teachers were required to pass a competency examination to retain their certification. The statute also required teachers to teach in the classroom at least four hours a day, an unusual subject for state law. Requirements applying to teacher preparation time specified that two days preparation must precede the opening of the fall term and one day following. The law prohibited the use of teachers for other activities during the period, and provisions also applied to alternative certification and authority to acquire non-certified people to teach technology programs. The act addressed standards in teacher education programs (one of the few to do so), and created a loan program for students working toward teaching credentials in critical areas.

A University of Texas' assessment has this to say about all of that:

> One of the most important areas of reform in House Bill 72 concerns the treatment of teachers. Several changes — including salary increases, the establishment of a career ladder, a required competency exam, and a state-funded college loan program for prospective teachers — were based on the philosophy that nothing can be done to improve the quality of education in Texas without changes in the teaching profession. The reforms were therefore designed to attract more people to teaching, to retain the best teachers, and to eliminate incompetent teachers. These changes have been among the most controversial elements of House Bill 72. While teachers have acknowledged that there is room for improvement within their profession, they have remained ambivalent over the reforms and have questioned whether they are a means of enhancing the profession or an insult to teachers.[11]

Such ambivalence is apparent among a much wider audience in Texas than teachers. A Department of Education official identifies the problem as a variant of the proverbial pouring of new wine into old bottles:

> There was a major salary increase and a career ladder, where you pay teachers more to stay in the classroom. This is one area where we have a lot of trouble, because we are using an old evaluation system. It is that system, which everyone feels is unfair, that we use to give out the career ladder bonuses. We are in the process of developing a new system where people have to go through a state training program and be certified before they

> can evaluate others. Presently, people feel they were improperly treated. But the Legislature wanted to get the money out there as quickly as possible. That would be something I would recommend for any state that is going to get into a career ladder: make sure they have the instruments they will use, and make sure people are trained in how to use them.

Others agree, as the comments of a member of the legislative staff reveal: "We increased the minimum teacher salary to $15,000. The career ladder is a separate, state-funded mechanism. Senior teachers are not very happy because it is not clear to them where they will be on it. Our career ladder also is not funded adequately. We rushed into career ladders, but there is no fair, equitable, evaluation system. We said districts should use whatever evaluation they had. The [Department of Education] set minimal guidelines, leaving districts a lot of flexibility. Some don't want to be involved."

Representatives of the leading Texas teachers' union also display some uncertainty over the outcome: "We helped precipitate the convergence of all these forces. It [HB 72] did not come out the way we wanted, although in some instances (financing, equalization, education as an economic priority) it did. Some of the specifics about how you deal with teachers, competency tests, career ladder, appraisal system, we are having problems with them."

Turning to another state, teacher salaries in Illinois were addressed indirectly through increased appropriations. Approximately $210 million was allocated to districts, causing one legislator to note, "One of the initial primary cost factors was the drive to increase beginning salaries to $20,000 [per year], which was a large part of the initial $550 million cost estimate. We did nothing about this other than increasing funds in state aid and leaving it to the local districts."

The omnibus legislation, SB 730, establishes a teachers' "Bar Examination" with provisions for testing in the basic skills (defined as reading, writing, grammar, and mathematics) and subject-matter knowledge. Passage is a requirement for certification. The statute also requires demonstration of knowledge of certain specified areas for qualification for an administrator's certificate.

Extensive provisions for teacher evaluation are set forth in the legislation. In addition, the teacher dismissal provisions are amended to require the dismissal of unqualified teachers and teachers who fail to satisfactorily complete one-year remediation plans. Pilot career ladder programs also are provided. The act creates an administrators' academy and requires the state board to establish a schedule by which administrators throughout the state must receive training through the academy. Criminal background investigations are required for new school employees, teaching and non-teaching. Finally, provision is made for teacher scholarships in shortage areas and for administrator internships.

Perhaps the relatively reduced noise level in Illinois ("Other than for school district reorganization, the school reform program has been pretty well accepted by all facets," according to an Illinois legislator) is associated with the decision to proceed through pilot projects toward the establishment of a career ladder. But the outlook for this subject is less than certain. "We have nothing like a career ladder here. We've done some background work, and it may be that we'll go that way, but not now." [Illinois Legislator]

Money for salaries was one of the big hopes of the Illinois approach. As a legislative staff member put it, "One thing we did which may be more important than all of the other stuff is the money we gave education. We gave it the largest increase they've ever had in this state. This next year we want to give them a little more on top of this. Most goes for salaries. Possibly that may do more good than all of the other legislation. This spring I hope to find out what happened to all this money. I don't think I'll find many new programs."

Other reactions are more mixed:

> There was something done on the subject of personnel. There was a 'Bar Exam' for teachers, but they did not really address the issues of how you get talented men and women to come into teaching when you raise the standards and hold the salary constant. They really shied away from the salary question [providing some funding, but leaving that decision to the districts], largely because of costs and the fact it would drive new taxes. There is no career ladder, no distinction between talented and untalented people. They did have some pilot programs, but really a minimum kind of thing. Evaluation is all they get credit for. They did do something there." [University Professor]

An Illinois state legislator views it a little differently, "We did not go off the deep end on anything. The evaluation is reasonable. We didn't get hung up on a career ladder. The things that were pretty controversial and could have broken things up, we put into pilot programs. I concluded early on that we could not have a state salary system. You can't go to a minimum salary without a state salary schedule, and this would cost zillions of dollars. You can't ignore the guy up the line. Our view was to let them work that out locally. This is where the $211 million went."

In Florida, salary increases averaging $2,000 per teacher were provided. This state also established a merit pay program for teachers, which probably will be converted into a career ladder system. Written competency examinations and evaluations already were required under the provisions of earlier (1978) legislation. Passage of an examination also has been made a requirement for entrance into teacher training programs in Florida. Teachers must have at least 30 semester hours in their subject field to be certified to teach at the high school level.

Florida (along with Texas) is one of the few states to attempt anything directly affecting the teacher training programs. An official with the state Higher Education Board offered the following observation on the state's schools of education. It probably applies as well to other states. "We started looking at teacher certification requirements. It was clear that almost every other professional field — business, architecture, pharmacy, nursing, you name all the professions that require license or certification — had made significant changes in their curricula from the way they looked in 1940. But in our colleges of education the curriculum looked almost as it did 40 to 50 years ago, and it raised some very tough kinds of questions. We started looking at differences in what the students were taking versus those in other programs, and I am sure you can fill in the next 20 pages; students came in with lower grade point averages [than students in other programs] but they exited with higher achieved grade point averages."

Under the new Florida requirements, in order to retain their state accreditation, teacher training programs must maintain a 90 percent graduate passage rate on performance evaluations and an 80 percent passage rate on the required written certification examination.

With respect to other provisions of the Florida program, districts are authorized to hire qualified noncertificated personnel in shortage fields. Summer institutes are established to provide training in such fields and funds are provided for the development of training programs for principals.

The merit pay and merit schools programs in Florida have probably created the most controversy among education professionals. "I'm sure you've been in this business long enough to recognize the standard business and industry retort to any kind of talk about money for education. 'We don't want any kind of across-the-board raise. We want merit pay, because we want to pay our best teachers more.' So we ended up with a state merit pay system, which, if you have followed the problems with this program, you know it is in a lot of trouble." [Florida Legislator] And, "Merit pay has to be, and will prove to be, the biggest fiasco." [Florida Department of Education Staff Member]

At least some of the resistance to merit pay is attributed to financial limitations. "As soon as they put quotas [which were budget-driven] on the thing it was obvious that only three or four percent of the total force could qualify. Had they said, 'We'll put up $300 million, and everybody who can meet those standards will get it, there would have been more receptivity. [But] it was simple arithmetic. You take $30 million and divide it by 100,000 teachers, when they were also talking about how teachers would get $3,000 for three years, you can see there's a humongous disparity there." [Florida Teachers' Union Representative]

"In Florida, we had $96 per instructional teacher. Tennessee had $39 million for [merit pay] awards alone, while Florida had $6 million. In Utah, with 18,000 teachers, nowhere near the size of Florida, they had $15.5 million dollars the first year, and $31 million the second. So Florida was not putting enough money into the program, for one thing. So you've got this narrow little band at the upper end of the spectrum that can even have a chance." [Florida Education Consultant]

Finally, "Even if we substitute a career ladder for this [merit pay plan], I think it is going to take time. We can't just say, 'Okay, we're going to have this career ladder now.' I don't know that pilots are good in a career ladder. I don't know how that would work exactly, but whatever is done, it is going to take time to get it right. Money is vital to any program. We always try to quick-fix or Band-Aid, or try to convince people we've got the panacea, when really it is all politics. Whatever we really do is going to take time to do the right way." [Florida Teachers' Union Representative]

This issue is prompting talk of support for a state lottery among the teachers in Florida. The following exchange is excerpted from an interview with a teacher in that state:

> "That [the lottery] is about $300 million, and if we can get it earmarked I think it is going to get on the ballot, and if it does that I think it will pass."
> [Interviewer] "I notice that Bill Honig in California is opposing the earmarking of lottery funds in California, in the belief that it will simply displace general funds."
> "Yeah, . . . yeah, we understand that too. We might have to reassess it. We don't want that to replace general revenue dollars for education. We would really like for it to be used for a one-

> shot boost for teacher salaries, getting us to the upper quartile like we've been talking about in Florida since 1980. We're further from that now than when we started. The only way we'll get there is a one-shot transfusion. You're never going to make it in drips and drabs. It would require $300 to $400 million. If we could get the lottery to put us there, we could use general revenue dollars to keep us there."
>
> [Interviewer] "Your average salary is what now, $26,000?"
>
> "Nah, it's about 22."
>
> [Interviewer] "Twenty-two!"
>
> "Yeah, we're about 34th, 35th in the nation."

Moving on, the Colorado Legislature paved the way for local career ladder programs there by authorizing the maintenance of more than one teacher salary schedule in the district. A few other changes were made, but again, Colorado has opted for further review by the state department before extensive legislative action.

In California, teachers' starting salaries were improved, and a voluntary teacher mentor plan was created. Legislation enacted in 1981 requires pre-certification passage of a basic skills test. California also requires annual field experience for college teachers of methods courses. Districts with shortages may hire noncertificated staff, and provision also is made for forgivable loans to students entering critical fields. Finally, California requires completion of at least 150 in-service training hours each five years as a condition to retention of certification.

One encounters the general impression in California that work respecting the teaching profession is not finished. In December, 1985, a member of the legislative staff stated, "Teacher education is at the top of the agenda now. They had this privately funded commission. We're on that right now. Teacher selection, credentialing, and that kind of thing will be addressed. We're going to have a bunch of bills. Some don't require money. Unions have bought into this, but I don't think they've read all the fine print in those recommendations in *Who Will Teach Our Children*."[12] At the same time, this remark should be juxtaposed with the following to ensure balance: "The inside sources say that the agenda in '86 will be school construction, because of our heavy growth, and not teacher reform. Teacher reform issues will be deferred until 1987. The governor needs to do something about construction in Southern California during this election year. Next year [1986] is an incubator year, so I would look to 1987 as the session when something does or does not happen with respect to teacher education. But there's a lot of pressure building up, and there is a serious shortfall of teachers in Southern California, which is propelling the issue beyond what the educational establishment usually can do." [California Education Lobbyist]

As part of its approach to the subject, South Carolina eliminated long-standing provisions effectively granting tenure to teachers after six months of service, replacing them with requirements for one- to four-year probationary periods. Salaries were increased to the average of the southeastern states, and an incentive program to reward superior performance [merit pay] was established. Teacher evaluation must transpire at least each three years. At least one academic quarter of student teaching is now required for candidates for certification, and a loan program to encourage students to enter shortage fields was developed. Students with a baccalaureate degree in shortage fields can be admitted to teaching upon passage of a examination. Centers for excellence in teaching were authorized, as was reimbursement to students for the costs of courses required for recertification. Finally, the State Department of Education was required to increase its requirements for the approval of teacher education programs. As mentioned previously, South Carolina also increased the teaching year by five days, to 190 days, to allow additional academic planning time. Unnecessary paperwork and classroom interruptions for teachers were to be reduced under the provisions of the enactment.

Teachers in South Carolina appear to be generally supportive of the program, with the possible exception of the incentive pay part. "The teachers have mixed reactions to that. At this point there are some problems with some of the components. It's in the pilot stage. Only nine of our districts are piloting it. I would say reactions are guarded. We have not yet seen a full-scale report." [South Carolina Teachers' Union representative]

Money is also a problem in this state. "One of the problems with merit pay programs is they find out there is not enough money for them. The way ours is set up, even though they say there are no quotas, there's only enough money for about 20 percent. In my school, that would amount to two teachers. People would not be happy thinking there are only two merit teachers in their school." [South Carolina Teacher]

Finally, during 1985 in Washington state, a mentor teacher program (The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program) was established, to provide experienced teacher assistance to new teachers. The program provides stipends to experienced "superior teachers" who participate in training workshops and serve as mentors for new teachers. Under the program, funds may be used to hire substitutes to replace either teacher so that they may work together. Revealing a questionable presumption that superior teachers are evenly distributed, the law requires that the selection process lead to a reasonable distribution throughout the state. The program begins modestly, with funding for 100 mentor teachers and a promise to increase the figure to 1,000. As with other education reform programs in Washington, funding was an important consideration, and the program was made contingent upon its treatment in the budget. That contingency was met.

Also during the 1985 session, the state superintendent was directed to develop minimum criteria for the evaluation of classroom teachers, and principals were statutorily required to evaluate teachers at least twice a year. This last provision may be excessive, since it is hard to imagine how a principal will be left with time for anything else. Another piece of legislation requires the state superintendent to design in-service education programs in academic efficiency and classroom management for teachers. While a career ladder program was not adopted, the Legislature (SB 3235) declared its intention to consider one. The Legislature also authorized forgivable loans for teachers in shortage areas.

In a non-legislative action, the state superintendent was directed by the state board to design a model competency examination for prospective teachers and report back in 1987.

Washington teachers' average salaries usually place highly on the national charts, but there has been slippage in recent years, and the issue is an important emergent one. Modest increases for teachers were authorized for 1986, but the subject is likely to be reopened during the 1987 session.

Generally, since 1977, Washington's approach to school reform has been incremental, perhaps influenced by the heavy burden the state budget must bear if there is any significant change. Teacher unions in the state displayed resistance to career ladder programs, even though they were top priority items for the Washington Roundtable and the state's study commission. Nevertheless, a fair amount of ambivalence is evident in the remarks of the former chairman of the study commission: "I'm not sure how I feel about the career ladder. There's a problem there, as teachers presently run out of room [on the salary scale] after about 14 years, and from then on can look only to the beneficence of the Legislature for salary improvement. That's not good. But there's a lot of faddism in education. I think the state can learn a lot from what's going on in Tennessee and Florida. I think we ought to just sit back and watch for a while."

Finally, while concerns about future teacher supplies underlay many of the arguments for changes that will attract new people into the profession, analyses to determine the magnitude of the presumed impending teacher supply crisis were limited. This contributed to a curious paradox as advocates of reform insisted that improved preparation programs, salary systems, and working conditions would serve as powerful inducements, and antagonists insisted that such changes would only exacerbate conditions, as potential teachers would find it more difficult to enter teacher training programs and achieve certification upon completion. At one point it appeared that the consensus would settle on the traditionally simplistic expedient of simply increasing salaries and leaving everything else as it was, at least until the "crisis" abated. This danger prompted at least one study commission to question the need for anxiety about the future teacher supply:

> It has been suggested that [changes directed to more rigorous teacher preparation programs] in concert with demographic fluctuations (i.e., 'the baby boomlet') will create a shortage of teachers. We do not believe this to be the case.
>
> Openings in teaching in this state account annually for about half the available graduates. More specifically, based on Superintendent of Public Instruction data, the percentage of new graduates placed in teaching has ranged from 40 percent (1974) to 60 percent (1982, including teachers employed as substitutes and aides). However, the total number of graduates each year has decreased by about 50 percent over this period (from about 5,000 per year to 2,500). Thus, the net number of annual placements of new graduates declined by about 500.
>
> . . . Shortages may be expected in some fields, such as math, science, foreign languages, vocational and special education. While these problems need to be addressed, they operate independently of general demand patterns in teaching, and there is early evidence that prospects of employment are inducing students into these fields. On balance, we do not anticipate a teacher shortage. Indeed, we believe that more rigorous preparation programs, improved conditions of employment, and more appropriate salaries offered within an expanded salary system [career ladder] will have the effect of attracting qualified students in increased numbers.[15]

Similar impressions were reported in Colorado:

> The data we have simply reflect that the number of teachers that are actually available to teach is significantly in excess of the demand for those teachers. The reserve pool is very, very strong. In 1984 we had 20,800 teachers, approximately, and in the supply pool there is over 44,000. During our literature search of other states we found that they were equating their demand directly with the supply coming out of their own respective institutions. And that's probably only 50 percent of the potential supply. We get a great number of our teachers from out of state. We don't feel that we have a significant supply problem or anticipate one, with the exception of mathematics, and special education. What's interesting is that the press picks up on something like a teacher shortage, and then, suddenly, we get all kinds of calls from teachers that are not employed, and they say, 'We'd like to know where those jobs are.' [Colorado Department of Education Staff Member]

Feelings are strong, however, in states such as Florida, which rely on in-migration. They believe they have a problem:

> There is going to be a teacher shortage in Florida, particularly by the 1990s. Florida draws about 60 percent of its teachers from out of state. Our current shortage comes at a time when the K-12 [age] group has been relatively stable and the 20-29 year group has been growing. But now these patterns are starting to reverse. There will be a sharp increase in the K-12 age groups; that has already hit. It has hit kindergarten and the first grade, and it will move through the system, at the same time the college-age groups are declining. It's scary. What is likely to happen is that the other states will be able to absorb more of their own teachers. [Department of Education Staff Member]

The debate probably will continue, although both sides agree that if there are teacher shortages, they will not be long-lived. Writing in 1986, Emily Feistritzer of the National Center for Education Information observed:

> There are about 2.18 million public school teachers in the United States today. The annual turnover rate for teachers because they retire, have babies, move to different districts, or simply leave teaching is about six percent per year and has not changed significantly since the 1970s . . . . Even given the gloomiest

> projections, we should remember that the total number of teachers will have to increase from today's 2.4 million public and private school teachers [Note: the earlier figure refers only to public school teachers] to about 2.6 million in 1992, when hiring each year would have to be only a third higher than it is now.[14]

If this argument is reasonably correct, prospects of teacher shortages in many states are probably overstated, and as reasons for postponing reforms, they probably are specious.

Finally, with most of the emphasis on evaluations and salary systems, there was surprisingly little attention directed to improving the professional status of teachers through changes in the workplace. In the words of a teacher now working as a policy analyst in the nation's capital:

> Schools look alike, and life in the schools perpetuates itself. Unless we focus on ways to break that chain, and begin to change that culture, we are doomed to an unsatisfactory cycle of reform attempts. As a teacher, I felt that schools were pretty strange places to work. There was kind of a perpetuation of roles. Teachers became students vis-a-vis the administrators, and the hierarchy stretched about above you. There were very few opportunities for peer interaction; relations with principals were almost paternalistic. And that hasn't changed much. It survived because there was a captive workforce, in terms of women. You could go in and out of it pretty easily without losing anything, because there was nothing to gain.
>
> Now there is no longer an available workforce interested in that kind of job. The setting is not supportive of the kind of people we want. This is where we must make the changes if we want to attract the right people.
>
> [Later] These changes range all the way from such perquisites, if you wish to call them that, as private offices, secretarial support, and telephones to being involved in school decision-making in a substantive way. No one talks about the symbols of professionalism, but those symbols are important if you wish to attract professionals.

And so it is with reforms directed to the professions — definitely an unfinished agenda. Changes in school governance and structure, representing the next topic in the sequence, also were limited and driven more by apparent concerns for accountability than improvements in educational effectiveness.

School Governance, Structure, and Finance

The Temporary Committee strongly recommended that the State Superintendent's office be made appointive, a position that certainly encouraged the incumbent to offer less than full support for its other proposals, and which probably contributed little toward any subsequent rapprochement.

Washington Study Committee Member

At some level of abstraction, governance issues are implicit throughout the school reform movement, as legislatures assumed responsibilities for matters delegated to state boards of education and local districts over the years. High school graduation requirements are a case in point. Governance also was a factor in such matters as college entrance requirements and teacher preparation, although, again with the exceptions previously noted, legislatures did not trouble the colleges and universities very much.

At a more specific level, the relevance and efficacy of present school governance systems was begged throughout, as legislatures eschewed change, opting for tacit endorsements of the status quo. Local control, district organization, and state-local relationships hold hallowed places in the nation's educational myth structure, and anything less than a concerted attack is tantamount to political suicide. This was the prevalent pattern, as homage occurred in the form of uncritical allegiance to the intrinsic value of educational decentralization. The states were more than conservative in their gloved handling of this.

Even so, outcries over the reform movement's presumed centripetal qualities were heard throughout the land, usually provoked by the state-level establishment of high school graduation and testing requirements, regarded by many educators as a blatant case of state usurpation of local prerogatives. In Texas, where there was an initiative aimed at the upper reaches of the educational hierarchy, the presumably temporary replacement of the elected State Board of Education with an appointed board [discussed further below] also prompted outcries over increased centralization in the state's reform program:

> The first area of reform in this state was governance, the elimination of the elected board. But there was a second thing that happened as part of that: more authority was given to the state. Texas was always a local control state, but now the state has significantly more power. [The state superintendent has] the authority to appoint a master to go into a district and overrule the local board if he feels the quality of education in the district is declining. [Staff Member of the Texas Education Agency]

Others in the nation's capital share such views, in this case about the reform movement in general: "Tremendous centralization is an aspect of the reform movement. With full state funding, more and more control is shifting to the state level, but in addition to the financing changes, the reforms of today are also leading to tremendous centralization." [Washington, D.C., Department of Education].

The centralization issue has both semantical and actual aspects. Semantical considerations involve the fact that the constitutional locus of responsibility rests with the state; school districts and local boards, as functionally oriented subdivisions of the state, usually lack constitutional mention. It is difficult, then, to attribute to them more than they should be. Thus, to a large extent, the centralization apparent in present trends may be more of a realignment, with a strong accountability dimension, as legislatures rap the knuckles of the local districts for too much laxity either by instituting new standards with general applicability or replacing the standards that were removed during an earlier time.

"Centralization" also is used to describe power shifts from *state* boards of education to *state* legislatures. Since both are central organizations, the term centralization is inexact and misleading. In Washington, for example, when the Legislature was considering enactment of statutory graduation requirements to replace requirements promulgated by the State Board of Education, the move was met with the local control argument (ironically, since the state board members in Washington are elected by members of the local boards, popularly elected legislators may be more truly in the radius of popular local control than state board members).

Concerns for centralization seemed to vary in some accord with the degree of satisfaction or opposition felt among members of the education community. From this came the "top-down/bottom-up" phenomenon described earlier. In a curiously tautological situation, frustration over the reforms aroused charges of top-down arrogance, and the charges themselves exacerbated the feelings of frustration and sense of alienation.

Finally, state legislatures are no more monolithic (probably less so) than any other organization. Members must remain cognizant of district political priorities if they want to keep their jobs. Teachers, board members, and school administrators tend to keep their legislative representatives informed of their needs. This is probably the greatest ultimate constraint on educational centralization in the political branches of government.

All of this is to say that the charges of centralization are at least as desultory as top-down perceptions.

In any case, in both of the "low-change" states included in this study (Washington and Colorado) the governance issue proved decisive, at least as an acceptable rationalization for relative inaction. In Washington, with the Legislature especially cognizant of the 1977 Basic Education Act and state assumption of responsibilities for full school-funding, the signal was caution. The financing issue was very strong, as, again by court decree, any statutory expansion in the definition of "basic education" becomes the fiscal responsibility of the state.

Also in Washington, at the suggestion of the study committee, consideration was given to changing the unique manner in which the State Board of Education is elected. In what may be one of the few remaining examples of democratic centralism (with the XVIIth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, U.S. Senators ceased to be elected by state legislators), state school board members in Washington are elected by local school board members. The committee recommended a board appointed by the governor. That proposal did not float long on the stormy seas of the 1985 session. A related committee recommendation for a gubernatorial-appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction, instead of the presently popularly elected form, sank about the same time. The latter recommendation was on especially weak ground, since the committee's own public opinion poll revealed less public support for this measure than any other, including a tax increase, a point that was brought up in the legislative hearing.[15]

The local control issue in Colorado was discussed earlier. For now it needs only to be recalled that it was a State Department of Education/local board plan to return local appropriations to the state to support a department review of the system that forms the essence of that state's approach to educational reform.

In Florida, where the governor's cabinet also serves as the State School Board, there was discussion of the appointment of a task force to study governance, but it does not seem to have progressed very far. In the words of one legislator, "The two terms, 'cabinet' and 'state board of education' are used interchangeably. Our State Board of Education is not a policy-recommending body. Well, it is, but not like other states with appointed boards. There have been some attempts to change this, but it would require a constitutional amendment to change it. It's been voted down twice."

In Texas, where some of the members of SCOPE displayed no confidence in the elected state school board's commitment to the program, ensuing and hotly-debated legislation led to its replacement with an appointed board. Although many attribute the idea for the change to the committee chairman, H. Ross Perot, others cite more widespread dissatisfaction: "There simply was no confidence [in the old board]. The governor, the Speaker, the Lieutenant governor, and Perot, none had confidence in the existing board, that it could be trusted to implement the reforms." [Department of Education Official]

This appointive method is scheduled to revert to the earlier form after four years unless the Legislature extends it. Opinions on the likelihood of that are mixed, although most seem to feel that the elected form will be allowed to return: "I think the appointed board will go back to elected. The appointed board's constituency is public education; they're not tied to the old lobbies. They can function a little more objectively. There is danger of backsliding with an elected board, but after things [programs] have been in place for a while, you learn to live with them and realize they're not so bad." [Texas Department of Education Staff Member]

A few other states made governance changes. Indiana designated the state superintendent as the state board chair and made the remaining 10 board members gubernatorially-appointed for four-year terms. Kentucky added a requirement that board members be high school graduates and receive at least 15 hours of training. Texas also requires training for board members, as do Georgia, Oklahoma, and a few other states. In Mississippi, the voters approved a constitutional amendment to create a nine-member state board and convert the superintendent's job into an appointed position. Finally, Tennessee created a new nine-member state board appointed by the governor to serve nine-year terms.

Some states also attempted to control qualitative standards through state-level accreditation processes, as in Texas under the provisions of HB 72, where the Board of Education may appoint masters to approve or disapprove actions by the local board or district. Failure to satisfy curriculum requirements is one of the conditions that can stimulate an accreditation investigation. State funds may be withheld from districts losing their accreditation.

In South Carolina's program, the state board also is required to develop criteria for evaluating the quality of education in the local districts. When evidence of the failure of districts to meet qualitative standards is apparent, the board appoints a review committee to study the district programs. Ultimately, the board may declare an emergency in the district, hold hearings, place district funds in escrow, and recommend to the Governor that the district superintendent's office be vacated.

During the 1985 session, the Washington Legislature enacted a requirement for the local boards to develop provisions for self-study on a regular basis. The process must be one that accommodates participation by staff, parents, community members, and students. The initial self-study must be completed by the 1990-91 academic year. The Legislature endorsed the school-based management model by establishing a pilot program in which several districts could participate. The program was subject to the availability of state funds, and, in keeping with the comments offered above, it was explicitly excepted from inclusion in the Basic Education Act.

Illinois and Washington studies demonstrating variances in the range of educational opportunities between small and larger districts that correlated with variations in test scores led to proposals for school district consolidation plans. In both states, the idea generated a storm as residents of small communities expressed fears over loss of community identification if the schools were moved. Individuals who were sympathetic to the argument for consolidation in Washington also were critical of the researchers' failure to consider breaking up the Seattle School District, which is the largest in the state. The issue threatened to split the study committee there, and the resultant recommendations where received by the Legislature with the enthusiasm usually tendered a dead mouse in the soup bowl. A similar series of responses was registered in South Dakota. The prognosis for district consolidation is not good, but the issue represents one of the few attacks on structure in the reform movement.

Before leaving the subject of governance, something should be said about vouchers. In its most popular form, a voucher system would provide parents with the financial wherewithal to send their children to a public or private institution, or to any school within either system. The topic is probably most appropriately considered within the general context of innovation or school finance, although the presence of parental choice causes most observers to view it as a governance issue. The public sector of the educational community opposes the idea, and while it was an important term in the school improvement rhetoric, it was not a very successful innovation.

Washington's select committee recommended a limited voucher system, whereby students could use vouchers (called "coupons" to avoid the connotations associated with voucher systems) to enroll in courses not offered in the home school. Usually these would be advanced academic courses, although advanced vocational courses also were included. The student would not move entirely to the new school, but would participate only in the appropriate courses and would continue to graduate with his class. This idea was considered in both houses of the Legislature, but it was opposed by representatives of the educational community (as logistically awkward). It was not adopted.

South Dakota considered a similar type of program, allowing students from small high schools to transfer to other districts. The idea, entitled the "Family-Option Plan," actually was enacted in 1985, although never implemented. It was rescinded the following year. As with those opposed to district consolidations, opponents feared it would lead to the closure of small schools.

In Minnesota, the "open-enrollment plan" enacted in 1985 allows juniors and seniors to take college courses with tuition paid out of the school foundation aid program. It is a considerably scaled-down version of the governor's original proposal. Perhaps not unexpectedly, the program has been challenged by the Minnesota Federation of Teachers and is awaiting trial in federal court. Thus, vouchers, an important part of the present federal administration's education improvement plan, got nowhere in their pure form and experienced only one test in a more limited form.

Turning to finance, the programs of greatest interest are those involving incentives for improved performance and efforts to raise money to pay for it all. California and Washington, both of which devote about half of their budgets to the public schools, found themselves up against an intangible barrier to the expansion of the state share. In California, school improvement programs were paid for out of funds generated through economic growth. [Note: A legislative analyst disagrees with this assessment as follows: "The actual cost of the reform program was closer to $950 million than the $800 million reported. The non-legislative controlling agencies didn't have a very good handle on their numbers, which helped us immensely in estimating costs. We had to raise about $450 million in revenue to support that. So we raised taxes in that bill. Half of SB 813 was a tax bill."]

In Washington, where reserves were much more limited, proposed school improvement plans ran into resistance associated both with a requirement for new taxes and expanding the definition of the Basic Education Act. The governor has established a commission to study finance and report back prior to the 1987 legislative session.

In the other states, the experiences were more positive. Colorado increased its sales tax by one-half of a percent in 1983 to pay for educational improvements. The increase, initially planned for a 10-month period, subsequently was extended. Illinois increased the cigarette tax to fund the changes required under SB 730. South Carolina and Texas relied upon increases in the sales tax to fund their programs. Various other changes in the school funding statutes and programs, usually with a concern for equalization, also were included in the reform packages.

Finally, some states used monetary incentives to improve educational quality. Under California's school improvement program, districts receive funding increases on a per pupil basis to develop and implement school improvement plans. The state department has developed state schooling goals and associated quality indicators. Goals for the immediate future include increasing enrollments in academic courses, improving statewide test scores, reducing dropouts and improving performance, and increasing and improving homework and writing.

The program provides incentive bonuses of up to $400 per student for districts with improved scores on the 12th-grade achievement test in math and reading, provided that not less than 93 percent of the students in the school take the test. This is also an example of the use of tests to measure school effectiveness, which has prompted one university professor to warn, "The state superintendent is for the performance report, since to sustain momentum you have to show gains. He does not believe [however] in dumb schemes such as using a screwed-up test and paying people for that. There are a lot of random test effects you get; he doesn't like any single indicator as an incentive system. So he opposed the Cash for CAPS; he tried to finesse it, by turning it into a multiple indicator thing."

Florida's Merit Schools program also uses monetary incentives. Funding limits are a problem, and this program has proved more controversial than intended. "The major difficulty with merit schools is that only 25 percent of the schools can be so designated. This means that 75 percent are not meritorious, and that creates all kinds of political problems." [Florida Legislator]

The idea behind this approach to school improvement is attributed to the business sector in much the same way as merit pay, often with the same level of feeling. A Florida legislator had this to say: "The only thing to come out of these deliberations [of the Florida Quality Instruction Incentives Council] other than a solidification of the business and educator positions, the only policy change, was merit schools, or the meritorious schools program. The council had a lot of test and measurement experts come in and provide testimony. The businessmen wanted to use test scores, the best teacher post-test, pre-test and post-test, all of that; the guy who can score best gets the bucks. The test experts pointed out that there were too many variables to make that any kind of an equitable process. The testing people were asked, what is the smallest unit you can really use in testing comparisons? They said, 'the school.' And so out of that evolved the meritorious schools idea, with test scores being one of the elements, the overall goal being student achievement."

On the Subject of Innovation

You could have taken almost any report out of any state and seen the same recommendations. None are that radical. Education reform here is pretty much more of the same. Do you think the education reform bill is going to change very much anything that goes on in the classroom? I doubt it.

Illinois Legislative Staff Member

Criticisms of the lack of innovation in the present reforms are fairly common. The curricular approaches were pretty basic, and while some of the incentive programs were imaginative, as perhaps to a lesser extent was the career ladder, most programs are pretty traditional: "The ruts are old and familiar and may not take us where we need to go." [Washington D.C. Policy Analyst]

Innovation is a relative term and therefore elusive. As with junk and treasure, one person's innovation is another's habit. Nevertheless, in some stark comparison with the more abortive efforts of the early 1960s, the reforms of the 1980s to this point have been something less than liberally spiced with innovation. There probably are several explanations. First, unlike the curricular reforms of 25 years ago (with their emphases on new teaching methods, materials and devices, most of which have since been relegated to school storage rooms [some say mercifully]), the present reforms have stressed accountability through testing, management, evaluation, and requirements. The actual business of conveying knowledge has been pretty much left alone. The reform movement's occurrence in a period of enormous technological change lends a certain irony to this. Second, there is the perdurable matter of cost. Enough already has been said about that. Third, there may be a feeling that innovations will take care of themselves. Computers, alternative teaching methods, new textbooks (led by the buying powers afforded by the centralized textbook purchasing some states, notably California and Texas) can find their way into school buildings without legislative directive.

The lack of innovation also may trace to the heavy involvement of state legislatures. Almost by their nature, these are not the best places to search for new ideas. Their natural bias works against it. For legislators, career ladder, merit pay, and achievement incentive programs are pretty radical, and that has been about as far as they have been able to go.

At the same time, satellite television receivers on rural school buildings might be a more politically acceptable alternative to the small school problem than district consolidation. Even so, the typical responses presumed a future classroom situation not dramatically different from the present. Many of the study committees called for innovation, but these recommendations were usually tabled or identified as fruitful areas for future inquiry. This is probably what one observer in the nation's capital had in mind when he described the reforms as "re-arranging the furniture." When he added, "on the deck of the *Titanic*" the description acquired an ominous quality.

The National Governor's Association, in the development of its August, 1986 report, *Time for Results* used a separate task force on technology, chaired by Gov. John H. Sunumu of New Hampshire.[16] In his chairman's report, Gov. Sunumu identified a lack of research to indicate which technologies have the greatest efficacy to the educational process, lack of district policies on the application of new technologies, a paucity of teachers, and the decentralized nature of the school market, all of which rendered the market unattractive to manufacturers. The task force encouraged the governors to support demonstration projects to determine the most cost-effective technologies, new research, the creation of market mechanisms, and district plans. In his summary of the report, Gov. Lamar Alexander called for "Better use of technologies through proper planning and training for use of videodiscs, computers, and robotics [as] important ways of [giving] teachers more time to teach."[17]

The governors' comments are typically revealing. They evince a certain facility with the terminology ("videodiscs, laser disks, robotics," etc.) while displaying an equal uncertainty over their potential, and they consider their greatest applicability to be as teaching aids — devices to assist the teacher with the actual business of teaching. Both characteristics find similar expression in many of the state reports. The following excerpt from the Washington select committee report is an example:

> During the course of our review we have encountered examples of new technologies with educational potential that can only be described as exciting. Computer-assisted instruction packages, laser video disks, satellite receivers for educational television reception in remote areas, four-year and community colleges transmitting advanced courses in math, sciences, and languages to high schools, and many other applications will enhance and expand traditional methods of transmitting knowledge. But as exciting as these are, their reception by the education community has been sluggish.
>
> Manufacturers, software producers, and others complain of problems in selling their wares to educators. There are problems associated not only with cumbersome purchasing procedures, but with the danger of pirated software. They also cite a reluctance on the part of educators to adjust to different methods of educational delivery.
>
> We are convinced of the importance of the new technologies. We do not feel, however, that we have had sufficient time to do them justice and, thus, are in no position to make specific proposals at this time. The area is in need of further examination, and, to that end, we suggest the creation of a task force of educators from the common schools and colleges and universities, and representatives of business and industry to consider it carefully and develop a report with recommendations for the executive and legislative branches.[18]

During the 1985 legislative session the committee pressed this recommendation and a related recommendation that the task force be given $100,000 for the study. Neither prompted an endorsement from any significant education association, and neither was implemented.

Implementation and Oversight

> *We had all of those national reports, and we had all of those committee meetings, and then we had the passing of legislation, and then we dealt with two or three years of passing regulations and going back over it, and arguing over 'You knew we meant this,' or 'No, you didn't ever tell us you meant that,' and 'This was our intent' sort of thing, and you kind of . . . You get this feeling that you need to think of something else. Oversight is not a sexy proposition.*
>
> South Carolina Legislative Staff Member

Implementation is the final subject addressed here. The reference involves both the immediate problems associated with what many consider to have been too much stress on hasty implementation, as in Texas or South Carolina, and the steps taken in some states to provide for continuing oversight and monitoring.

With respect to the first, a continuing problem has been lack of provisions for "phased implementation" — instantaneity was the imperative in many states, as reformers pressed to close the gap between idea and action. This created initial problems, but few consider them fundamental. Perhaps reactions might be best described in the words of some of those who witnessed them.

> Now we are moving away from consensus [on reform] at the state level to installation; we are full bore into installation, and there is no consensus on how it should be done. This is where almost every program breaks down. It's hard to gain consensus at the operational level. [California Education Consultant]

> The reforms were released on the districts without much concern for local capacity [to accommodate them]. This has hurt, and it must become the next item attended to — school based management, school site advisory councils, and principal

discretion in hiring teachers. The next steps are to enable the reforms to work by building local capacity, finding the mechanisms that inspire and energize the schools. This is school-based management — placing more decisions at the school site. There are pieces of this all around. [California University Professor]

There is a substantial period of time between when a direction is given and when it finally filters down to the people who are going to accomplish it. It usually takes about five years to reach down to the school level. Policymakers will say they passed a policy and it didn't work. What actually happened was it hasn't yet had enough time. [California Education Consultant]

The conception was fun, and the birthing wasn't too bad, but the implementation [sic] was hell. When you have a broad-based reform as we have in this state, and what makes it so difficult . . . really, there's not enough time. It calls for a tremendous amount of work in a lot of areas, and there's just not enough time to get everything done. This is the main problem with implementation. [South Carolina Department of Education Official]

Gosh, I think there are over 60 new programs or expansions of programs in the Educational Improvement Act, and the vast majority of them had to be put in place in approximately one year, at least gotten off the ground. This could not have been accomplished without the [State Department of Education's] regional implementation councils. [South Carolina Legislative Staff]

They [the new Texas State Board of Education] had a tough year the first year, as they had to virtually rewrite the Texas Education Code. They had to learn very quickly. . . . It's sort of an unreasonable implementation, and there are a whole lot of quirky things going on. The teacher appraisal program, the career ladder, they are problems because we tried to implement them too soon. [Texas Legislative Staff Member]

There has been a period of great change, and local frustration, based on the rapidity of the implementation. How do you change a system with 200,000 employees? You can't just turn it on and off. And it is such a shock. People are just trying to stay alive. Students don't know how to deal with this [1985-86] year.

> Teachers don't know how to meet the strict requirements of the curriculum. There is a lot of frustration, but we are going to end up spending a lot more time with students, and that will have to make a difference, especially with the elementary schools. [Texas School Board Administrator]

With respect to the second dimension, oversight, several states established formal structures to monitor implementation and guard against the possibility of backsliding. Among those examined here, South Carolina's is clearly the most extensive (although several others merit more than honorable mention).

In South Carolina, the two blue-ribbon committees involved in the initiation of the program have remained in effect. "They keep interested, and they annually have to give a report to the Legislature of any changes." [Governor's Assistant]

Perhaps of greater legislative visibility is a Select Oversight Committee headed by a state legislator, with representatives of the governor's office, the state superintendent, and "the national teacher of the year" as members. The commitment seems strong, but some suggest that as a legislative organization, the committee may slip into neglect: "The people who have written about oversight find that it's much more exciting to be out there pushing a new issue than it is keeping tabs on an old one. Which, incidentally, is what is so unusual about the present chairman, who has been so committed to it that he is not going to let it fail, even if no one gets to sleep when he's around." [Legislative Staff Member]

Earlier this year, legislative staff members in South Carolina prepared a report on the Select Committee on Legislative Oversight under a grant from the National Conference of State Legislatures and the National Institute for Education [NIE], concluding that the system is working well and that it has had an effect on the implementation process. Recommendations for improvement were minor.[19]

Even if there were to be some slippage in the legislative oversight mechanism, which is not likely at present, the Educational Improvement Act established a Division of Public Accountability in the State Department of Education and charged it with preparing an annual report on progress for general public consumption.[20] The working relationships between this organization and the legislative oversight committee appear to be strong.

The final ingredient in the oversight plan is the Implementation Council System established by the South Carolina Department of Education. As described by an official of the department, "Every school district in the state has an EIA Implementation Council chaired by the superintendent, selected teachers, and others in each of the schools. They meet once a month to review any implementation problems, successes as well as problems. That group leads into what we call the regional council, made up of representatives, superintendents and school board members from the region. . . . Then there is a State Implementation Council, which again includes members from the regions, and others. . . . I think the system probably has done more than anything else to head off issues before they become problems, and I think it has given people in the districts and the general assembly insights into what's going on and steps being taken to solve problems." This program seems to be headed in a direction similar to Colorado's under the 1971 Accountability Act.

All of these programs receive high marks from people in all sectors of education in South Carolina, and they reflect the degree of commitment to the Educational Improvement Act in that state.

Texas' oversight committee is the Legislative Education Board, which the speaker and the lieutenant governor alternately chair. The State Board of Education may make recommendations for statutory change in the reform program, but the consensus is that these recommendations will not be considered unless the Legislative Education Board adds its stamp of approval. "The Legislative Education Board provides a linkage between the appointed [State Board of Education] board and the Legislature, and it offers an opportunity for some give and take, as it formalizes the structure." [Department of Education Staff Member] And, "The LEB periodically meets to monitor progress and receive reports. I see that in terms of how we've perceived interim committees in the past. The State Board of Education is the primary player in the drama at present, in terms of developing rules and procedures. The LEB gives a forum for a dialogue between the [Department of Education] and the Legislature. But it has not met often enough to be directly involved in making the kinds of decisions that need to be made during the interim between sessions. Its proposals will carry a lot of weight with the Legislature." [School Administrator] Finally, "The Legislative Education Board is one of the most powerful things to come out of this." [Teachers' Union Representative]

The remaining study state with formalized procedures for oversight is Illinois, where the Legislature provided for the Board of Education Oversight Committee, consisting of 12 legislators and four staff members, to "watch over implementation of the reform package." [Legislator] This committee is scheduled to make recommendations for adjustment or further change next year.

* * * * *

With this summary, the review of the contents of the state reform programs draws to a close. It may not be necessary, but a further reference to the lack of exhaustive treatment in these descriptions is nonetheless apt. Other compilations, many of which have been prepared by the Education Commission of the States, are infinitely more inclusive than the material here, and the interested reader is encouraged to consult them.

FOUR

Whither Reform?

It's difficult to make forecasts, especially about the future.

S. Goldwyn

"It seems very pretty," she said when she had finished it, "but it's rather hard to understand!" (You see she didn't like to confess, even to herself, that she couldn't make it out at all.)

"Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas — only I don't exactly know what they are! . . ."

Lewis Carroll Alice in Wonderland

O, life is a glorious cycle of song,
A medley of extemporanea,
And love is a thing that can never go wrong —
And I am Marie of Rumania.

Dorothy Parker

It is probably still too early to predict the future of educational reform, if it will continue, or where it will go. Some feel the movement has peaked. According to a California professor, "My view is that you've seen what you're going to see by the end of 1985. The next couple of years will be digesting years." He would find a kindred soul in the legislature in Sacramento: "The schools are fixed. If they're not, there's going to be trouble. We're doing water and prisons now. We may do teachers, but we will not do curriculum or programs again. We're done with that."

The opinion of a South Carolina legislator is more uncertain: "I think we are perhaps at an incredibly tenuous point in terms of whether the reform is going to be a reform." A Florida legislator feels about the same way: "I don't know who the new governor will be. The candidates are not anti-education, but it is not among their major programs. Florida has so many problems. The roads are a shambles." And, from Palo Alto come these prophetic words, "The political forces are not there. The states have shot their wad. They have raised taxes, the economy is slower now. You have a system that can't take much more of this."

Politics are a factor, but one cannot be sure which way they will tilt the scale: "School improvement is a hot political issue. Several governors have a lot riding on it. But as they move on in their political careers, they will be followed by others who will need to build on other political issues. Almost by definition, what is hot today will be cold tomorrow." [Washington D.C. Public Policy Analyst] The current Governors' Report, *Time for Results,* may suggest differently, as it purports an agenda for the next five years. According to Chairman (and Governor of Tennessee) Lamar Alexander, "Our report is named the Governor's '1991 Report' because it looks ahead for five years, but it will take keeping better schools on the front burner for longer than that."[1] According to another opinion, "Since it's dated 1991, we won't have to worry about it till then."

John Goodlad's expression of concern for the limited and rather obvious nature of activities in the first stage and the importance he placed on moving to more profound changes in the second was noted earlier. In a similar vein, a California professor harbors hopes that the reforms will continue in that state:

> California may not be finished with educational reform in the near future. It will probably continue, but it is such a fast-change state, buffeted by external forces, demographics, and ethnic shifts, and so much growth. It has a dynamic to it that keeps it moving.

A Texas legislative staff member similarly hints at continuing support in the face of some opposition with the observation, "There was an effort at an Omnibus Cleanup Act, but it failed." And finally, from Washington state, a staff member in the Department of Education opines, "I think the window will be open for a long time, much longer than expected."

Reflection stirs impressions about the worth of it all. They begin with recognition that most of the actions have focused on symptoms. This may come from the emphasis on pragmatic solutions, the presence of strong political figures who required direct and describable alternatives, the absence of leadership from the professorate, the limited depth of the research base, or, most likely, a combination of these. As more recent national reports of more limited scope emerge, for example, calling for fundamental changes in the way teachers are prepared, attention may be shifting to organic problems.

Up to this point the changes have stayed close to the familiar. Mortimer Adler's Paideia Proposal requires a new and different way of looking at the school, the classroom, and the curriculum, but its realization has proved beyond the adaptive capacity of either the educational or the political systems. [Some experimentation is underway in Atlanta under a National Faculty project.] One must believe that the lack of such innovation relates at least in some degree to a lack of flexibility or capacity for accommodation in legislated and bureaucratized systems. The template may not fit.

Part of this problem also must relate to the unfortunate reality that few people know how to operationalize such changes; they cannot tell others how to get to there from here. A former member of the Governors' Association staff put it very well: "Most researchers cannot make the quantum leap from their research to the policy implications of that research."[2]

Some reform proposals are truly so dramatic and sweeping that they elude feasibility, but there are others more readily comprehensible, and they sometimes did not make it either. Voucher plans did not progress far, either in pure form or in more limited permutations. The politicization of this interesting notion, by virtue of its attribution to the conservative proclivities of the present administration, assures continued inertia. The introduction of foreign language studies into the elementary years has so far proved too dramatic a departure from convention for acceptance, even though logic suggests the schools are presently doing it all wrong by waiting until the secondary years. Substantial changes in the school year or the ages at which children are admitted into (and exited from) the schools similarly have not progressed far. The Carnegie Unit, which to some education reformers is as fluttering capes are to bulls, has not faded. Earlier comments on the application of the new technologies need not be repeated here.

One reason why the bias favors the familiar is that new programs must be paid for, and cost overruns in social arenas can be almost as formidable as those occurring in corporate production processes. This is why engineers, social and otherwise, like prototypes. Receptivity increases with familiarity, as does legislative dexterity with the purse strings. Unfortunately, legislatures are not the best organizations to approach for support for experimentation. It usually works the other way, as in those institutions pilot programs and studies are political ways of disposing of uncomfortable proposals.

On their behalf, the state policymakers who make the final decisions are rarely overwhelmed with initiatives from the research community. Most state agencies are more involved in the administration than the design of programs. Legislative staffs usually have about all they can handle with session-related work and trying to stay on top of the myriad proposals that float to the top. Legislative councils, which used to perform legislative policy research, also are finding their time occupied by the demands of annual sessions and increasingly full-time legislators.

For their part, public universities operate in a self-limiting atmosphere created by the lack of room for research projects with state policy application in their reward systems. This was one of the reasons the education colleges split off in the first place, but professional consulting contracts seem to have taken up the available research time of people in those units. Enough has been said about the retreat from educational research by the national government to allow the absence of any further reference here. It is relevant to note, however, that the void left by that withdrawal has not been filled by state-sponsored research programs.

The point of all of this is that there is nothing necessarily wrong with political processes as the route to change in education as long as they can be informed. In this respect, however, states do not demand as much assistance from their public institutions of higher learning as they might, and they do not provide as much direct funding for that support as they might.

Before passing, it should be noted that the education schools do not seem to hold the answer. At many levels, education faculty are perceived as members of education's interlocking directorate. The E-schools have been pretty much left alone by the reform programs to this point, although this may be changing. A university professor in Texas referred to the reform movement as the usual "Bashing of the E-Schools," but it is hard to agree that this has been the case. It usually went the other way, as too many education faculty members disdained what was happening when they contributed their wisdom.

The lack of research support and problems with teacher training programs are not the only criticisms directed at higher education. Many believe the universities also have a responsibility to keep pressure on the schools through the maintenance of admissions requirements that will send a continuing and compelling message to the students at the secondary level. They also need to occasionally remind themselves that they are part of a larger system. Cooperative programs with the high schools, the joint preparation of competency statements, planning guides, and curricular programs are only a few of the activities that could be jointly pursued. Harold Hodgkinson stresses the need for such interaction as he observes that, "The only people who see [the system] as a system are the students."[3]

Just as the attention must shift upward to the colleges and universities, so must it shift downward, from the high schools into the middle school and elementary years. The preponderance of the changes directed to student achievement has so far been felt mainly at the secondary level. Those changes are important, and they need to be fully embraced by educators, but they also need to be pursued further down into the feeder system. Education clinics designed to help drop-outs achieve their diploma are effective, but they are a little late, and they are treating an illness that might have been avoided entirely with earlier treatment.

All of the emphasis on student achievement reduces ultimately to early attention to providing students with the tools they need later, bringing them to necessary levels of literacy, teaching them to read and write and calculate arithmetically. Once these skills are in place a lot of the rest follows normally. But without better early instruction, improved screening, and more effective remediation, the high school program will be too late for many students. Grade retention, failing students or holding them back, does not seem to be the answer, and on this point educators are sensitive: failure in the early years parallels too closely subsequent decisions to dropout. If social promotions are not acceptable, then improved instruction coupled with diagnostic and remediation services are the remaining alternatives.

Diagnostic programs mean testing, and this is one of the most important parts of the improvement programs of the past 15 years. Properly used, these programs can provide the tripwires that fire the alarms, drawing attention to the problems of individual students and entire systems. A lot more work needs to be done in this area, especially on the purposes, timing, content, and uses of tests. And that work also must be an important feature of the second stage.

Not much has been said of reforms concentrating on school effectiveness, the incentive programs, the application of the Effective Schools research, work with school principals and administrators. Much of this is underway, and a lot of it is highly promising. Since many of these projects are concentrated on the localities, ways need to be found to disseminate information on their effectiveness and on the kinds of programs that work.

Progress is less apparent with respect to problems applying to the profession of teaching. Many of the present state efforts (i.e., career ladders) are already in trouble. Yet, it would be a misfortune of enormous magnitude if, for example, attempts to establish differentiated salary systems in the teaching profession were allowed to fail. Unless legislatures display an uncharacteristic willingness to support enormously greater general salary increases for teachers, the only alternative is more discretely structured systems. Similarly, additional ways must be found to get teachers more effectively and fully involved with their schools. Time for planning and participation in school matters, some of the perquisites familiar to college faculty such as professional leaves, opportunities to attend meetings in their disciplines, perhaps regional seminars for teachers and faculty members, support for travel expenses, as well as more obvious things such as offices, and desktop computers, to name only a few, represent relatively low-cost possibilities here. There are many others.

During the field work portion of the research behind this report, four cycles of educational reform were identified as: 1) Issue Identification; 2) Crisis Activity; 3) Disillusionment With Results; and 4) Return to Neglect.

The elliptical pattern in that description matches Crane Brinton's assessment of political revolution, which he compares to a fever that either kills the patient or brings him back to normalcy. A distinguishing characteristic is reaction, return to "benign neglect," a "Thermidorean" represented by a resurgence of conditions not much different from those present when the whole thing began.[4]

The bias of any system favors stasis. Political movements are fleeting, while bureaucratic processes endure. Chester Finn speaks to the dimming effect of this as he lists characteristics that will work against the acceptance of the changes among educators:

> — Each of professional education's vested interests is threatened by many of the changes.
> — The imposition of the new standards flies in the face of educators' unwillingness to accept the notion that someone might fail.
> — Educators have been reluctant to prescribe what teachers should be expected to learn.

— In the minds of most educators, excellence and equity continue to stand in a contradictory relationship.

— Too many educators continue to assume that nothing different can be done without more money.

— Educators have "woven an elaborate tapestry of beliefs and explanations enabling them to deflect accountability for what happens in schools." The most influential forces are those beyond their control.

— Finally, within the profession, and within the colleges of education, a deep-seated ambivalence exists about what the education system should look like. Not the least of this is an attitude toward school teaching that borders on contempt.[5]

At this point helpful metaphors are distressingly elusive. In some respects the reforms of the first half of the '80s are like the assault stage in a military campaign. While harboring certain reservations about the thing, that stage is complete, and the prevailing indications are that it was a success. The question now is, what next?

The "Holmes Group" (an organization of education deans from about 40 leading colleges and universities) and the Carnegie Forum's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession place the new emphasis on reforming the teaching profession. Like the nation's governors and others, they also speak of a protracted effort. The Holmes Group calls for a five-year effort to make the changes. The Carnegie panel estimates the changes it recommends would require "real annual revenue increments of 2.8 percent over 10 years."[6]

The direction of these reports, teacher preparation programs and the teaching profession in general is entirely appropriate. A few others also can be delineated.

— Testing programs helped reveal education's drift and the need for reform. They must be continued, but their purposes should be clarified, and there must be assurances that particular tests are relevant to those purpose. They offer an important feedback link to monitor effectiveness, but their most important quality is realized when they are used for diagnosis and tied to corrective services. Sample tests, or universal tests used to determine school eligibility for incentive awards are of little use to a student if the scores are lost in the amalgam, or if they do not lead to special attention. Student-specific testing programs, particularly in reading, should be started early and continued at least through the middle-school years. Further research into testing programs with the objective of continued improvement is an obvious part of this.

— The relationship of competency statements to teaching goals and tests is clear. Their formulation demands the participation of representatives of both the public and the educational sectors, including people in the universities. In a very real way, competency standards become the educational goals of the system, and widespread involvement in their development is at least as important as representative efforts to achieve consensus on more broadly intended district goals.

— Much of the attention of the reform movement has fallen on the secondary schools. In the next phases, it must be shifted to the earlier grades: reduced class sizes, improved techniques for the teaching of literacy skills, and other actions oriented to improving acquisition of basic skills. Business interests, which have supported reduced classroom ratios in Texas and pre-school programs in South Carolina and Washington, also must see their needs as ultimately tied to student literacy. This requires at least as much attention to the early years as has been recently devoted to the secondary schools.

— Less progress on teacher-related measures has been made than on other changes. There is danger of a shift away from differentiated salary systems, evaluation programs, and in-service training with the passage of time. These changes, however, can have a lasting effect and the states must press on. Participatory efforts are especially important here.

— For the most part, the colleges of education came through the reform movement unscathed. Yet, there must be improvements in the manner in which teachers are trained. The specific response can take many forms, although it does seem that if teachers truly wish to be treated as professionals, they must accept some of the conditions of professionalism. This means licensing or certification tests, more rigorous and effective training programs with at least a significant portion of the courses in the subject areas in which they plan to teach, and continuing involvement in relevant and effective in-service education programs.

— There is a need for research in all aspects of education. The departments of education are not the usual places people turn to for this. Funding for research projects from the state, as well as from sources other than the state and federal educational establishments, could help here. In addition, universities could establish research institutes to assist state governments in the search for solutions with policy efficacy, whether they concern education or other sectors. Funding could be through state-funded contractual arrangements or direct appropriations for specific services. Private grants also would be helpful.

— Grass-roots organizations are important instrumentalities for keeping the public involved. They rarely have the resources to mount a sustained drive for change, however, and a great deal of their energies is dissipated through fund raising. They also need to deepen their informational base and establish more extended and informed consensus formation programs. A little more support for them could contribute a lot to their improved effectiveness. It also would help if the funds appeared up-front, as their campaigns began.

— Many good ideas never achieve wide implementation because there is no way to test and improve them. Limited pilot testing programs on any number of innovations in public education could provide the experience and evidence legislators require before they can support implementation on a wider scale. The teaching of foreign languages in the elementary school, innovations in the teaching of reading, reduced class sizes in certain grades and subjects, the renewed use of educational television to improve educational programming in rural schools, the application of new technologies to classroom processes, increased office support for teachers, even such proposals as career ladders all are candidates for pilot testing before proposals with broader application are presented. Funding from private sources for such programs could have an enormous effect by providing opportunities for experimentation and experience.

— As the din begins to hush, there is a danger that the information on the results of the state programs will languish. National organizations, perhaps most appropriately the Education Commission of the States, could perform an enormously important service by monitoring and reporting on the effects of the changes. The questions of interest are endless: What are the effects of reduced class sizes in the early years, as in Texas? Are the no pass/no play programs having their desired effects? Are the implementation council and oversight committee efforts in South Carolina and Texas working? What empirical information can be offered on the experiences of the new graduation requirements? And so on.

— The natural tendency following a period of intensive public and political activity is to relax, as the focus shifts to the next item on the policy agenda. That could be fatal to the education reform effort. Some reduction in intensity is to be expected, but pressure must continue. Appropriate future areas of inquiry are suggested here. State legislatures and education departments also might consider establishing permanent monitoring and oversight systems, perhaps tied to local efforts. This could ensure both continued state-level attention and that this attention is directed to the most important needs.

Education reform programs are useful for periodically shaking up the system. But at some point the emphasis has to shift from the big splash to the sustained swim. Now is that time.

This report opened with the proposition that much of the worthiness of the changes is found in the reassertion of public control of the system they represent and in their mandation of standards and their implicit assumption that all children can and should receive an education. It is very difficult to envision an early retreat from these advances, but it is clear that positive efforts are necessary to continue the movement. It has taken nearly 95 years, but at last the country may be starting to take seriously the principle of universal education. And that's what it's all about.

APPENDIX

Summary of the National Reports

The early 1980s seem to have been the high point years in the education reform movement. Not only were these the years when action occurred in many of the states, they also witnessed the release of a substantial number of national reports, most of which were either affected by what was going on or had some effect on what was happening in the states, stimulating interest, sometimes influencing content. Important reports have been introduced more recently, especially the National Governors' Association (*Time for Results*), the Carnegie Forum's Task Force on Teaching as a Profession (*A Nation Prepared*), the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (*Who's Looking Out for At-Risk Youth*), the ECS Business Advisory Commission (*Reconnecting Youth*) and the "Holmes Group" (*Tomorrow's Teachers*), but the tempo is slower. These later reports were published in 1985 or 1986 and, with the exception of the governors' report, which is more inclusive in its coverage, address either the teaching profession or the alienated student. They postdate the following summary but are mentioned in the main text.

Counts will vary, but at least a dozen early 1980s reports and books that were national in scope can be identified. A systematic recitation is outside of the scope of the present report, but a brief review of some of their salient features is informative.

The reports include, *A Nation at Risk*, National Commission on Excellence in Education, initiated August 1981, issued April 1983; *Action for Excellence*, Education Commission of the States' National Task Force on Education for Economic Growth, initiated 1982, issued June 1983; *Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do*, The College Board, part of 10-Year Education Equality Project, issued May 1983; *Educating American for the 21st Century*, National Science Board Commission on PreCollege Education in Mathematics, Science, and Technology, initiated July 1982, released September 1983; *Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Policy*, Twentieth Century

Fund Task Force, initiated 1981, released May 1983; *A Study of High Schools*, National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools, initiated 1981, released 1984; *America's Competitive Challenge: The Need for a National Response*, Business-Higher Education Forum, initiated 1982, released April 1983; *Making the Grade*, Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Policy, initiated 1982, released May 1983.

Significant books published about the same time include Ernest Boyer's *High School: A Report on American Secondary Education* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), the Paideia Group's (Mortimer Adler, editor) *The Paideia Proposal, An Educational Manifesto* (New York: Macmillan, 1980), John Goodlad's *A Place Called School: Prospects for the Future* (St. Louis: McGraw-Hill, 1983), and Theodore Sizer, *Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School* (Hopewell, N.J.: Houghton-Mifflin, 1984).

Reports presenting summaries almost outnumber the original documents. Those reviewed in the preparation of the present report include: Jack L. Davidson and Margret Montgomery, "An Analysis of Reports on the Status of Education in America: Findings, Recommendations, and Implications" (Tyler, Texas: Tyler Independent School District, 1983), Ian McNett, "Charting a Course, A Guide to the Excellence Movement in Education" (Washington D.C.: Council for Basic Education, 1984), Education Commission of the States, "A Summary of Major Reports on Education" (Denver: ECS, 1983); J. Lynn Griesemer and Cornelius Butler, "Education Under Study: An Analysis of Recent Major Reports on Education" (Chelmsford, MD: NEREX, 1983); Library of Congress Research Service, "Comparison of Recommendations from Selected Education Reform Reports" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, No Date), and National Association of Secondary School Principals, "Almanac of National Reports" (Reston, VA: NASSP, 1983). The last of these is a wall chart.

All of the summaries were prepared in the midst of the issuance of the reports themselves, and some may lack perspective. Also, with different release dates, they do not all address the same reports, although most address the major ones. These summaries provide useful categorizing systems for comparison purposes, probably proving most useful to those who have read the original materials. The original documents should be consulted, however, by anyone seeking a fully accurate assessment.

The report with the most dramatic effect was that of the National Commission on Educational Excellence, *A Nation at Risk*. In fact, this report has come to symbolize all of the rest, and references to the contributions of the national literature tend to be stated in terms of titular references to *Risk*. Thus, from Colorado, "*A Nation at Risk* was great. It stimulated the country to be informed about education, to take another look at education, and I think we are seeing some of the changes taking place at the initiative of state departments, boards, legislatures, that are very, very positive," and, from Illinois, "Outside of the board, before *A Nation at Risk*, there was not a high level of interest and quite a bit of uneasiness."

All of the efforts clustered around a few themes and similar remedies. Most also agree on the relatively limited range of purposes to be served by education, e.g., revitalization of the economy and, sometimes, national defense. Most assume at one point or another that improved educational performance is essential to both the economic and the social well-being of the nation's citizens.

References to unrealistic expectations placed on the schools frequently occur. The social responsibilities assigned to the schools are considered grandiose and sometimes unattainable, often distorted at the district or the school levels in the curriculum and in the expectations conveyed to students. John Goodlad insists that schools' goals are mired in a "conceptual swamp." Ernest Boyer writes of "a numbing hodgepodge of rules and regulations."

Student achievement is a major theme, and standards and curriculum represent areas of commonality. Here the level of agreement displays a fair amount of specificity, and there appears to be consensus on the need for a core curriculum. While there is some variance in terminology, English language development and writing, computational and problem solving skills, science, social studies, foreign language, and the arts represent the essence. Significantly, they apply to all students, whether their goal is college attendance or not. Indeed, according to several of the reports, a plan not to continue one's education into college creates an even greater need to complete these studies in high school, since college would otherwise offer further opportunities to fill in the gaps.

A Nation at Risk identifies the "Five New Basics" in terms of seat-time requirements: four years of English, three years of mathematics, three years of science, three years of social studies, and one-half year of computer science. Two years of foreign language added to these requirements are recommended for the college-bound.

Ernest Boyer also employs seat-time totals, using a somewhat reduced listing of individual requirements offset by specific references to a wider range of subjects. Thus, he recommends 2.5 years of language and literature, 3.5 of social studies, 2.0 of mathematics, 2.0 of science, 2.0 of foreign languages, .5 of computer science, .5 of the arts, and .5 of vocational/career education.

John Goodlad approaches the subject in terms of percentages of school experience. English leads, with a requirement of 18 percent, followed by social studies, arts, and vocational education, each with 15 percent. Electives comprise 10 percent; mathematics and science would each receive nine percent of the student's instructional time and effort. Mortimer Adler's, *The Paideia Proposal* does not relate the curriculum to seat-time, but the full range of curricular options except for computers, vocational education, and electives is covered.

Vocational education in the high school does not fare well. In fact, vocational educators around the country criticize the reports for virtually ignoring it. Ignoring may not be the right word. *The Paideia Proposal* flatly rejects it, calling upon schools to eliminate from the curriculum all training for specific jobs. There was either disdain or avoidance in many others, sometimes expressed in calls for introductory courses in career education which would not demand too much of the limited time available for the full expression of the more academic curriculum.

Either the vocational education courses were considered irrelevant to present and projected employment needs, or requirements for education in the academics simply outweighed them in the recommendations for curricular reform. *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* assumed a critical stance, noting that vocational education has been "devastatingly challenged" but continues largely unaffected by the evidence of its failures. John Goodlad, who includes vocational education as one of his five fingers of the curricular hand, joins with Mortimer Adler and Ernest Boyer in recommending against job specific training. He also was especially critical of the effects of vocational education programs on minority and economically disadvantaged students.

In recommending a basic curriculum for all students, the reports either directly or indirectly called for an end to tracking. Those that addressed the practice directly were outspoken in their disapproval. Ernest Boyer states that, "To call some students 'academic' and others 'nonacademic' has a powerful and, in some instances, devastating effect on how teachers think about students, and how students think about themselves." He recommends the abolition of the present three-track (academic, general, and vocational) program and its replacement with a single-track program. Goodlad was able to find nothing worthwhile in present tracking programs, while finding a decidedly undesirable effect on the poor and minorities. He also notes the stability of tracking patterns throughout the educational experience of students: once placed in a lower ability track, students rarely ascend into a higher one. Tracking by ability level is, therefore, a self-fulfilling prophesy. Finally, Adler states, "We should have a one-track system of schooling, not a system with two or more tracks. Failure to provide the same quality of education for all students is worse than a promise broken; it is an ideal betrayed."

With respect to other aspects of the teaching-learning process, the reports called attention to the wasted senior year, as students complete their requirements and coast during their last year in high school. This led to the general argument that the existing classroom time should be better organized and rendered more effective before moving to a longer school day or school year. There were some exceptions. For example, *Educating Americans for the 21st Century*, in its call for substantially more time devoted to mathematics, science, and technology, states that a longer school day, week, or year should be required. *A Nation at Risk* calls for additional time to meet the special needs of slow learners or the requirements of gifted students. In its commitment to the New Basics, the report recommended a longer day or year as an alternative if more effective use of the existing day cannot be achieved.

Expanded homework requirements were viewed as another approach to enhanced student achievement. And improved classroom performance, instructional materials and textbooks, the application of new technologies to the teaching-learning experience, approaches to the reduction of discipline problems, and improved attendance practices also receive frequent mention.

The more recent report prepared by the MDC organization for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation (*Who's Looking Out for At-Risk Youth?* see *supra*) is critical of the state studies for their lack of attention to the problem of dropouts, euphemistically referred to as "At-Risk" or "Disconnected" youths. This could apply to the national reports as well, and the subject may not have been addressed as often as it should have been. Two exceptions are *Action for Excellence* and Ernest Boyer. The former calls upon states and communities to establish local programs to solve dropout problems and speaks to needs to address absenteeism more directly through revitalized educational materials and flexible course schedules. Ernest Boyer recommends a reentry school arrangement in every community to permit dropouts to return to school, if need be on a part-time or independent study basis.

Testing and guidance programs, which also relate to the problem, are mentioned more frequently. *A Nation at Risk* recommends testing programs that would require demonstration of mastery of content and skill before award of a diploma and achievement tests administered at major transition points. Periodic testing also is recommended in *Action for Excellence*. *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* notes the important role performed by guidance counselors and calls upon the federal government to establish a national mechanism for measuring student achievement. Ernest Boyer recommends a new test to replace the SAT. It would be known as the Student Achievement and Advisement Test (SAAT) and would be linked to the core curriculum.

A Nation at Risk calls for more relevant practices so that grades will once again become a reliable indicator of a student's readiness for further study. Perhaps running indirectly counter to others' positions on ability grouping, and while not endorsing tracking, the Commission recommends placement and promotion policies guided by the academic progress of students and instructional needs, rather than by rigid adherence to age. *Action for Excellence* calls for an end to social promotions, agreeing with the Commission's position on promotion based on subject mastery. *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* also finds itself in that throng.

This brings one to the recommendations on the education professions, which represent the second major theme of the reports and of the education reform movement in general. Quality of teacher candidates is a recurrent concern, and recommendations speak to cadet teacher programs (in which high school teachers identify gifted students and encourage them to become teachers), full-tuition scholarships for students planning on entering teaching, and a National Teacher Service for students planning on teaching science and mathematics, all of which are advanced by Ernest Boyer.

Admissions standards for teacher training programs are another theme, and such reports as *A Nation at Risk* and the *High School* contain recommendations on this subject. With respect to program standards, *A Nation at Risk*, *Action for Excellence*, *Educating Americans for the 21st*

Century, the *High School*, and the *Paideia Proposal* each contain recommendations for the colleges and the universities.

Several reports contain references to teacher in-service training, but only two, *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* and Ernest Boyer's, *High School* provide specific recommendations. The first calls upon state governments to develop such programs, taking into account the potential of off-campus sites, such as science museums, as places where they might be offered. The members of this committee also pointed to the federal government as the responsible entity to ensure the presence of appropriate training, particularly summer programs. The committee recommended that the states provide regional training and resource centers, and suggested that the NSF might be able to provide seed money for training programs in the "new information technologies." Boyer recommends the addition of a two-week teacher professional development program to the school year, with appropriate compensation. He also calls for teacher travel funds in each district to make it possible for teachers to attend professional meetings. Finally, every five years teachers would be able to qualify for a paid 12-month contract that would permit a summer study term. Qualification would be based on a study plan that would be reviewed and approved by peers and district administration.

With respect to projected teacher shortages, most of the reports limited their concern to areas of pressing need: mathematics, science, and foreign languages, and for specialists to work with the gifted and the handicapped. The National Science Board recommended assignment of top priority to the training and retaining of teachers in the mathematics and science fields.

Greater space was directed to the issue of qualifications. The National Commission, for example, criticized the lack of qualifications among newly employed mathematics, science, and English teachers. Similar positions were expressed in the *Educating Americans for the 21st Century* and *Action for Excellence* reports. While both called upon the states to improve the certification process, they also cautioned against the erection of barriers that would preclude the participation of qualified people from business, industry, and other fields outside of the teaching profession.

Teacher evaluation and incentives were popular themes in the reports. The National Commission's position was direct: salary, promotion, and tenure decisions should be tied to effective evaluation systems. *Action for Excellence* stated essentially the same point. Grants, loans, special scholarships, improved teaching environments, and recognition programs were among the suggestions proffered for rewarding excellence in teaching.

Teacher salaries, of course, are the most direct approach, and calls for improved salaries for teachers were frequent. The National Commission's position provides a good example: salaries for teachers should be increased and rendered professionally competitive, market sensitive, and performance-based. The last, performance-based, was a popular theme as the reports argued for merit plans, career ladders, and differentiated schedules, not all of which are the same, but which signal the general insistence that improved salary programs be used as a *quid pro quo*.

The reports also singled out other members of the education professions, perhaps most frequently the principal. *Action for Excellence* called for differentiated pay related to responsibilities, with rewards for extraordinary performance. Improved standards for the recruitment, training, and evaluation of principals also were proposed. Ernest Boyer called for a year of administrative internship for new principals and paid leaves of absence to secure the necessary training for individuals with promise in the district, so that they might be encouraged to seek positions as principals.

Finally, the reports contained a number of recommendations concerning necessary conditions for improved performance. These included greater autonomy for teachers, acknowledgement of the important role of school leader for principals, and greater building management autonomy for principals, along with a stronger role for them in the selection and rewarding of teachers. Differentiated roles for the state and the district, with the former establishing the expectations, and the latter afforded freedom in fulfilling them were endorsed. Calls for continuing planning processes, with extensive parental and community involvement, Parent-Teacher-Student Advisory Councils, Parent Volunteer Programs, and community coalitions were among the measures prescribed.

Business and industry were frequently singled out for special attention, and entry points for them were many and varied. These extended from active participation in curriculum development to the lending of personnel. The members of the commissions also seemed to feel that people in business and industry had a special management expertise that could be readily applied to the rapid resolution of school problems, if only the appropriate people could be unleashed. In fact, while a content count was not performed, recommendations and statements on strengthened relationships between the industrial and educational sectors seem to have appeared with great frequency. Virtually all of the reports had something to offer on this subject.

The reports concluded with something to say about the state and federal roles in public education, often *vis-a-vis* the local districts. ***Action for Excellence*** stressed a state role in the development of an action plan for public education and called upon the governors to establish state task forces on "Education for Economic Growth." ***Educating Americans for the 21st Century*** called for governors' councils to stimulate change, develop and monitor the implementation of state educational goals.

Efforts also applied to a definition of an appropriate federal role, including an identification of the national interest in education. This was probably the most popular single topic, although the specifics varied greatly. Most agreed, however, that while the federal government's role was important, it was a supporting role.

Additional federal funding, especially for special programs recommended in the reports, was a frequent recommendation. For example, the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force recommended federal funding for a national Master Teachers Program that would recognize and reward excellence in the classroom. The Task Force also called upon the federal government to state clearly that the most important objective of education in the United States was the development of literacy in the English language; a series of specific federally-sponsored steps were associated with the achievement of that goal. Ernest Boyer may win the prize for being the most imaginative and expansive, as he called for federal establishment of a National Film Library, the creation of a National Commission on Computer Instruction, ten federally-funded Technology Resource Centers on university campuses (one in each federal region), expansion of Title I services to all eligible students, a National Teacher's Service, a federally-funded network of residential academies in science and mathematics, and a federal school building and equipment fund to provide short-term loans to schools for remodeling and equipment.

This summary should be considered no more than that. It does not capture the tone of the original materials, and it obviously does not list all their suggestions for change. Those materials should be consulted for a more flavorful and filling repast.

ADDITIONAL READING

To list all of the books, papers, summaries, analyses, bills, reviews, articles, and precis taken into account in the preparation of this treatise would tax the writer's patience and contribute little to the elucidation of the reader. As a bibliography, then, the following listing is incomplete. However, if used in concert with the notes applying to the text, it may be of some help to the person interested in additional reading.

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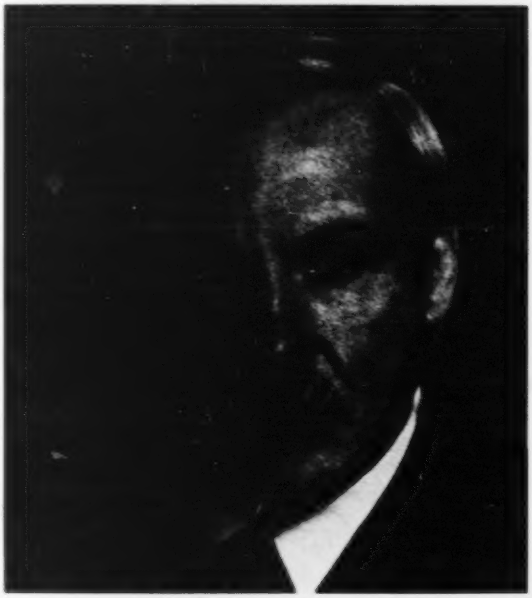
About the Author



William Chance is the former executive director of the Washington State Temporary Committee on Educational Policies, Structure, and Management, a position he assumed shortly after the Legislature created this select committee in 1982 to study the state's public education system — kindergarten through graduate school.

Prior to that he was deputy director of the state's Council for Postsecondary Education, a post he held for 12 years. He previously served with the Ohio State Legislative Service Commission. He has a Ph.D. in political science from The Ohio State University, and is the author of numerous reports and articles.

William Chance resides in Olympia, Washington, where he is a research consultant, runner, sailor, skier and policy entrepreneur. He has four daughters, Megan, Robyn, Amy, and Tonia, all of whom graduated handily from high school but quickly discovered that homework is required in college. So far they have managed the transition.

Source Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. "Education Finance in the States: 1984" (Denver: ECS, 1984) p. vi.
2. The proposals and recommendations of the earlier national reports and several major books on the subject are reviewed in the Appendix. With respect to the those mentioned here, the citation for the first is, Department of Education (Washington D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1983); the version of the second used in the present report appeared in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 21, 1986: 43. The rest of the citation for the third is "(Washington, D.C.: 1986)."
3. Interview, October, 1985.
4. Interviews, respectively, with U.S. Department of Education Staff, Washington D.C., October, 1985, and a California Department of Education official, Sacramento, December, 1985.
5. "Gee Officer Krupke," *Policy Review*, Summer, 1984.
6. Interviews in Washington D.C. and Sacramento, California, October, and December, 1985.
7. An interview with a reporter who was seeking the writer's opinion of "Effective Schools" (capital letters are not distinguished in the spoken language) still evokes a reflexive twinge. Unaware that the term had been recently co-opted and capitalized, the response was something to the effect that it is important for all schools to be effective.
8. Three studies influence many of the views in this section of the report. All speak to the societal and economic pressures imposed on the schools, and to their responses to those pressures. In her book, *The Troubled Crusade* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), Diane Ravitch reviews American education from the end of the Second World War to 1980, extending probes into earlier years. Her chapters on Progressive Education and modern reform are especially relevant.

   In his book, *Who Controls Our Schools* (New York: Freeman & Company, 1984), Michael Kirst argues that the range of responsibilities imposed upon the schools is such that improvement cannot be achieved unless there are substantial reductions in expectations or significant increases in time or resources.

   Arthur G. Powell, Eleanor Farrer, and David K. Cohen, in their book, *The Shopping Mall High School* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1985) take the matter a step further and argue that social expectations account for the formation of the schools' horizontal and vertical curricula. Their chapter on Origins, with its indictment of Progressivism in American education, is compelling.
9. Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade*, op. cit., Introduction, p. xii.
10. *Who Controls Our Schools?*, op. cit., pp. 51-52.
11. *op. cit.*
12. op. cit.
13. Educationists have more recently begun to speak of 'numeracy,' which one must presume is to mathematics what literacy is to reading and writing. This seems like a good word, but it is missing from the dictionary. Hence, in this report, 'literacy' subsumes it.
14. Interview, October, 1985.
15. Berkeley interview, December, 1985.
16. *Legislated Learning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979).

THE SETTING

1. Kirst, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
2. *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1962) p. 1.
3. Powell, Farrar, Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 241.
4. *ibid.*
5. U.S. Bureau of Education, *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education: A Report of the Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education Appointed by the National Education Association* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918) cited in Ravitch, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
6. *Cardinal Principles, op. cit.*, cited in Powell, Farrar and Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 256.
7. Ravitch, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
8. Kirst, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
9. Powell, Farrar, and Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 259.
10. *ibid.*
11. *idem.*, p. 251.
12. idem., pp. 267-68.
13. *That All May Learn* (Washington D.C: NEA, 1939), cited in Ravitch, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62.
14. Barry Franklin, "The Social Efficiency Movement Reconsidered: Curriculum Change in Minneapolis, 1917-1950," *Curriculum Inquiry*, 12, no. 1: 9-33, cited *ibid.*
15. *idem.*, p. 58.
16. *Educational Wastelands: The Retreat from Learning in Our Schools* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1953), cited Powell, etal., *op. cit.*, p. 281.
17. Arthur Bestor, *Educational Wastelands: The Retreat from Learning in our Public Schools* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1953), cited Ravitch, *op. cit.*, p. 76. Emphasis added.
18. *idem.*, p. 233.
19. Powell, Farrar, and Cohen, *op. cit.*, p. 283.
20. *ibid.*
21. *idem.*, p. 288.
22. Charles Silberman, ed., *The Open Classroom Reader* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), xvi, cited *idem.*, p. 251.
23. Joseph Adelson, "Educators are Stuck in the 1960s," in Gross, ed., *The Great School Debate* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985), p. 320.
24. "Report of the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline, *On Further Examination* (New York: CEEB, 1977), p. 27, cited in Ravitch, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-12.
25. *Legislated Learning, op. cit.*, p. 12.
26. These examples and others appear in Wise, *idem.*, pp. 11-31.
27. Wise, *Legislated Learning, op. cit.*, 25.
28. ECS, *School Finance Reform in the United States: 1983* (Denver: ECS, 1983).
29. Wise, *Legislated Learning, op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.
30. *RCW 28A.58.752*
31. *See, Don Sevener, "Education at fork in the road: mandates or outcomes," Illinois Issues,* April, 1985 pp. 18-23.
32. Illinois State Board of Education, *Phase I Mandates Studies: Final Staff Recommendations* (Springfield, ISBE, 1983).
33. The contents of many of the national reports prepared before 1985 are summarised in the Appendix.

34. *ibid.*
35. *op. cit., mutatis mutandis,* p. 2.
36. *op. cit., mutatis mutandis,* p. 4.

THE PROCESSES OF REFORM IN THE STATES

1. *The Zero-Sum Society* (Basic Books, 1980).
2. *Democracy in America* (New York: Mentor, 1956).
3. Olympia, Washington, October 2, 1985.
4. This term is introduced by James N. Rosenal and Ole R. Holsti in "U.S. Leadership in a Shrinking World: The Breakdown of Consensus and the Emergence of Conflicting Belief Systems," *World Politics*, April 1983, pp. 368-392.
5. In his book, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, John W. Kingdon identifies three processes by which agendas are set and alternatives specified, in effect addressing the first two of the stages identified in the present text. Kingdon speaks of the Problem Recognition, Accumulation of Knowledge and Perspectives, and the Political as the three processes involved. All of these are in some measure relevant to the present material, but in this report the issue extends beyond agenda formation. Nevertheless, Kingdon's discussion proved helpful. His thoughts on the subject are summarized on pp. 17-19 of his book. (Boston: Little-Brown, 1984).
6. "The Excellence Agenda: The States Respond," *Educational Horizons*, Winter 1984, pp. 4-7.
7. Former blue ribbon committee member, Seattle, September 1985.
8. Materials touching on this subject and reviewed in the present report include: John W. Gardner, *Excellence* (New York: Norton, 1984); Craig R. Hickman and Michael A. Silva, *Creating Excellence* (New York: New American Library, 1984); John Naisbett and Patricia Aburdene, *Re-Inventing the Corporation* (New York: Warner, 1985); Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, *A Passion for Excellence* (New York: Random House, 1985); John Naisbett, *Megatrends* (New York: Warner, 1982); Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, *In Search of Excellence* (New York: Warner, 1982); and Noel Tichy and Mary Anne Devanna, *The Transformational Leader* (New York: Wiley, 1986.

    John N. Terrey, Director of the Washington State community college system, offers the following additional references: Burt Nanus and Warren Bennis, *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985); James McGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978); Harlan Cleveland, *The Knowledge Executive* (New York: E.P.Dutton, 1985); Peter F. Drucker, *Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (New York: Norton, 1984); James O'Toole, *Vanguard Management* (New York: Doubleday, 1985) and Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (San Franciso: Jossey-Bass, 1985).

    Finally, one also should consult Dr. Terrey's address, "Leadership Can Create Excellence" (August 14, 1986), at the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges' 1986 Orlando meeting.
9. *Presidents Make a Difference*, cited by John N. Terrey, op. cit., p. 2.
10. Sorry about that.
11. December, 1985 meeting in the Main Lounge of the San Francisco International Airport.
12. The effect can be overstated. Most present state programs permit alternatives to graduation. Business math, for example, may be used to fulfill parts of the mathematics requirements. Also, many states are insisting on a seven-period school day or on other

scheduling arrangements that will allow students to meet the new graduation requirements while continuing to pursue vocational, or avocational, interests in the secondary school.

13. W. Norton Grubb, Project Director, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, "*The Initial Effects of House Bill 72 on Texas Public Schools: The Challenges of Equity and Effectiveness*" (Austin, University of Texas, 1985) p. xviii.

THE EDUCATION PROGRAMS OF THE STATES

1. This observation is based on a Spring 1986 telephone conversation with Chris Pipho, Director, Information Clearinghouse, at the Education Commission of the States.
2. ECS, in particular, has prepared excellent and much more complete summaries.
3. *op. cit.*
4. This word is a contrived variant of "academicism," which means the quality of being academic.
5. Illinois State Board of Education, "The Education Package of 1985: An Overview" (Springfield: State of Illinois, 1985), p. iv. (pages unnumbered in report).
6. See *op. cit.*
7. Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE), "Conditions of Education in California, 1985" (Berkeley: PACE, 1985), p. 8.
8. Harold Anderson and Mary Brouillette, "The Effects of Increased Academic Requirements for Graduation on Secondary Vocational Enrollments in Colorado," (Fort Collins: Colorado State University, 1985), Summary, p. 4.
9. PACE, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
10. Temporary Committee on Educational Policies, Structure, and Management, *The Paramount Duty* (Olympia: State Printing Office, 1985), Appendix.
11. Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs Policy Research Project Report, W. Norton Grubb, Project Director, *The Initial Effects of House Bill 72 . . .*, *op. cit.*, (Austin: University of Texas, 1985) p. 29.
12. Report of the California Commission on the Teaching Profession (Sacramento: November 1985). An earlier report prepared for the California Round Table on Educational Opportunity, *Improving the Attractiveness of the K-12 Teaching Profession in California* (Sacramento: March 1983) also was frequently cited. Both were consulted in the preparation of the present report.
13. Washington Temporary Committee on Educational Policies, . . . *The Paramount Duty, op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.
14. "A New School of Thought: Paying higher salaries isn't the best approach for improving teachers," Seattle *Times*, August 31, 1986, p. A-16.
15. Temporary Committee on Educational Policies, Structure, and Management February 1984 public opinion poll conducted by Market Trends of Bellevue, Washington.
16. Center for Policy Research and Analysis, Washington, D.C., 1986.
17. *op. cit.*, p. 3.
18. *Paramount Duty, op. cit.*, p. 45.
19. Jo Craig Anderson and Stephen L. Elliott, *Legislative Oversight: The South Carolina Select Committee* (Columbia, 1986).
20. The Division's first annual report, *What is the Penny Buying for South Carolina?* was released in December, 1985 (South Carolina Department of Education, Columbia). The penny reference is to the sales tax increase dedicated to the Educational Improvement Act.

WHITHER REFORM?

1. *op. cit.*, p. 6.
2. Interview, Washington D.C., October 1985.
3. *All One System* (Washington D.C.: Institute for Educational Leadership, 1985) pp. 1-3.
4. *The Anatomy of Revolution* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 11938, 1952), pp. 16-17. The capitalized parenthetical inserts are added here.
5. "Gee Officer Krupke," *Policy Review*, Summer 1984, pp. 75-76, reprinted in *Educational Excellence Network*, August 1984, p. 40.
6. Information on these two efforts is based on reports in the April 9, 1986 ("The Holmes Group") and May 21, 1986 and May 28, 1986 ("The Carnegie Task Force") issues of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

"We had **the best of educations** – in fact, we went to school every day –"
Lewis Carroll **Alice in Wonderland**

The quality of American education has dominated the public interest for at least the last half-dozen years. State reform efforts have been dramatic, although politics rather than education often was the independent variable. In the belief that there is much to be learned from these experiences, **"the best of educations"** examines events in California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, South Carolina, Texas, and Washington. Frequently in the words of those most directly involved, it describes where we are and how we got here. From these impressions, it identifies remaining needs and proposes promising strategies for the future.

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